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The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

BLINKIN' BLINKIN' AND RON

The trade of Nicholas Daniloff for Gennadi Zakharov is not, we are told on highest authority, a trade.

The summit meeting between the President of the United States and the leader of the Soviet Union is not a summit.

The twenty-five staff members of the Soviet mission to the United Nations, whose expulsion was, according to a White House spokesman, going to have "a crippling effect on the K.G.B. . . . like putting your hand in their heart and ripping it out," turn out not to have been so dangerous after all. Thus, they are being permitted to stick around until after the original October 1 deadline—that is, until after the non-summit summit decides their fate.

The less said about America's celebrated presumption of innocence—at least as it refers to the man whom the President and Secretary of State called a spy on national television—the better.

Then there was Zakharov's day in court. He was charged with a crime, conspiracy to commit espionage, whose penalty, life imprisonment, may not be suspended under Federal law. Since it couldn't be suspended, said the judge, it would be "waived." Telephone calls to a dozen constitutional authorities have failed to turn up anyone who understands exactly what that means.

Meanwhile, the press, egged on by the Administration, has tried obsessively to answer the wrong question: Who comes out ahead in the cold war? Ronald Reagan's answer: They "blinked" first. (But on second thought, said the President, he shouldn't have said that.)

Of course, there are no winners in the cold war, and given the nonsense of the past weeks, we are all losers in the language war.

ROVSEK REDUX
Eric Fettmann
Roberta Brandes Gratz

PRESSURE DROP
Alexander Cockburn

BEHIND THE DANILOFF CASE
Stephen F. Cohen

SHANTYTOWN
Jon Wiener

DAMN METS
Jamie Malanowski

JOHNNY TOO BAD (II)
Peter Schrag

RISKY SYSTEMS

THE HABIT OF COURTING DISASTER

CHARLES PERROW

If every disaster is unique, or disastrous in its own way, the three recent ones, at Bhopal, Chernobyl and aboard the Challenger, have at least this much in common: they all suggest that we need to revise our generalizations about catastrophes. To begin with, there seems to be no significant difference between capitalist and socialist societies as far as their handling of risky systems and their treatment of accidents. Nor is state or private ownership a significant variable. In the case of Bhopal, Union Carbide acted very much as governments do. We might expect that different government agencies would react differently in the face of catastrophe, but the behavior of both the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Pentagon in the Challenger case casts doubt on that assumption. Most surprising, perhaps, the occurrence of accidents and the manner in which they are handled bear little relation to the degree of vigilance about safety, if we are to judge from the accidents at the Union Carbide plants at Bhopal and Institute, West Virginia, or from the nuclear power plant problems in France and the United States. Finally, although accidents are frequent, catastrophes, such as the three discussed here, are rare. This is not because risky systems are safety-conscious but because it takes a combination of infrequently occurring conditions to produce a catastrophe. It is not so much that we have been lucky not to have had more disasters, which is the usual observation, but that it is difficult to have them.

Unfortunately, risky systems can be rationalized on these grounds. But even without that

(*Continued on Page 347*)

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LETTERS.

2 GOOD 2 BE 4 GOTTEN

Washington

In the May 31 *Nation*, Christopher Hitchens, in "Watergate—The Greek Connection," mentions my knowing Thomas Pappas. First of all, I have known Pappas for so many years that I can't recall how many they might add up to, but let's say thirty-five at least. Then, further down in the story, he claims that I squashed an investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee when Birch Bayh was chairman. I have no recollection at all of any investigation ever being held or even suggested by the investigating committee.

He further declares that Elias Demetracopoulos either had a conference with me or made a call to me but I can't recall this, even though I have known Demetracopoulos ever since I have been in Washington, which is coming up thirty years. I would like Hitchens to point out any proof he might have of any action I took to crush a Pappas inquiry because maybe my memory isn't as good as it should be at my age. I can tell you that Tom Pappas made contributions to candidates of his choosing, I would suspect mostly Republican, and made them in rather large sums for many, many years, long before Watergate, so I am most anxious to see what Hitchens can supply me with that would enable me to look into what supposedly happened at that time. *Barry Goldwater*

HITCHENS REPLIES

Washington

I am flattered that the Senator would ask my assistance. I think I can be of help. My article did not say that Elias Demetracopoulos "had a conference" or "made a call." It said that he interviewed Senator Goldwater in 1963 for the English-language *Athens Daily Post*. In that interview the Senator confirmed that Tom Pappas was "one of his closest friends." Since the publication of the interview led President John Kennedy in his last formal press conference to accuse Senator Goldwater of interfering in Greek internal affairs, I'm surprised that he doesn't recall it.

I'm also surprised that he says he has no memory of any Watergate investigation "ever being held or even suggested" by the Senate Intelligence Committee. I supplied chapter and verse references for Senator George McGovern's correspondence with committee chair Senator Daniel Inouye, imploring the committee to inform itself about the key role played in Watergate by Senator Goldwater's "closest friend" Tom Pappas. Attempts at mounting such an investigation were abandoned, and no small part was played in that process by Senator Goldwater. I have it on the word of a senior staff member of that committee that Senator Goldwater and his aide Earl Eisenhower "deep-sixed the Pappas investigation."

Now that we have documents that show Tom Pappas handing $50,000 to Attorney General John Mitchell at the height of the cover-up, why does Senator Goldwater not employ his considerable prestige to demand that the inquiry be reopened? He has stated on several occasions that Richard Nixon lied to him about the break-in. I can think of no better way to mark his retirement from the Senate than an effort to clear up the continuing legacy of those lies. And if he will agree to press for this, I will undertake to meet him and to tell him *in confidence* the name of my Intelligence Committee informant.

Christopher Hitchens

IN SEARCH OF OBJECTIVITY

Jersey City, N.J.

I was shocked to find that *The Nation* had assigned Edward W. Said to review *Terrorism: How the West Can Win*, edited by Benjamin Netanyahu ["The Essential Terrorist," June 14].

Assigning Said to write that review is analogous to having former President Nixon write a review of Woodward and Bernstein's book on Watergate. It is analogous to having Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev review Anatoly Shcharansky's forthcoming memoirs. Those extreme examples are chosen simply to epitomize the futility of having political enemies review each other's books.

A review should be written by someone with knowledge of the subject covered by the book, particularly in the case of nonfiction. However, the reviewer should be objective; otherwise the review becomes a polemic on the reviewer's point of view, doing little justice to the book. Such an essay belongs on the editorial page rather than in the Books & the Arts section.

In this case *The Nation* chose a member of the Palestinian National Council to review a book edited by a member of the Israeli government and dealing with the terrorism of the P.L.O., among others. I doubt that Said would have been pleased if *The New York Times* had chosen Ambassador Netanyahu to review certain of his books, such as *Orientalism*, *The Question of Palestine*, and *Reaction and Counterrevolution in the Contemporary Arab World* (which he co-authored).

I do not even deal with what I feel is an inaccurate review. I simply take the editors to task for not attempting to get a balanced review of a very important book on a subject that is uppermost in the minds of Americans: terrorism. What can one say about a review that includes a snide aside about Leon Klinghoffer, an innocent victim of terrorism if there ever was one? Said has a brilliant command of English and has continually twisted it in behalf of falsehoods and half-truths in his longstanding campaign against Israel. *The Nation* should be more careful in its choice of reviewers. *Robert Frauenglas*

CANVASBACKS WEIGH IN

Chicago

The generally thoughtful September 6 editorial "S.W.P.'s Day in Court" contains a number of misconceptions.

It erroneously claims that the Socialist Workers Party "bore the brunt of government blows to progressive politics over the past two decades." In fact, the F.B.I. operations against the S.W.P. were vastly overshadowed by F.B.I. attacks on other groups. As Judge Thomas Griesa indicated on page 71 of his decision, the F.B.I. carried out at least five times as many disruption operations against New Left organizations and at least twenty-four times as many against the Communist Party as it did against the S.W.P.

The editorial also erroneously states that the S.W.P. decision is the first to find F.B.I. disruptions, burglaries and informers unconstitutional. The decision itself refers to a 1984 Washington, D.C., case, *Hobson v. Wilson*, in which the F.B.I.'s New Left and Black Nationalist disruption programs were declared unconstitutional. It also refers to a 1979 case, *Paton v. La Prade*, in which a New Jersey court found unconstitutional the F.B.I.'s field investigation of an individual who wrote a letter to the S.W.P.

Richard Gutman

MORE ON MOORE

San Francisco

A letter supporting the dismissal of Michael Moore as editor of *Mother Jones* has been distributed by several managers and one staff member to the press, and is being taken as evidence that the entire staff stands solidly behind the decision. In fact, a careful survey of the *Mother Jones* staff would reveal a wide range of opinion.

While some agreed with the decision, others were angered and disappointed to see him go. In any case, although we still support the magazine, a number of us have strong objections to the way Moore was summarily fired and feel that in the interest of assessing his performance fairly, he should have been given an official warning and a chance to work things out.

Finally, many of us feel that hiring Moore was a bold move for the magazine. We hope that the next hiring will be as bold.

Peggy Lauer, assistant editor
Roberta Williams, business department
Nan Hamm, research department
Dana Sachs, editorial department
Silvana Nova, art department
Christine Alicino, business department
Martha Geering, art department
Kathryn Olney, research editor
Stephen Wagner, business department
Lola Campbell, bookkeeper
Richard Reynolds, publicity

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Editor, Victor Navasky

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EDITORIALS.

Money Talks

These are turbulent days in the world of international finance. The major Western capitalist nations—Japan, West Germany and the United States—quarrel about the steps to take to avoid what all fear could become a severe global recession in 1987. Among the signs of trouble ahead are: the continuing U.S. budget deficit, which drains investment capital from Europe and the Third World; the growing U.S. trade deficit with Europe and Japan; and the scramble to find ways to refinance the enormous loans made by Western commercial banks to Third World countries.

The seriousness of those problems made for a crisis atmosphere last week in Washington at the joint annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The two institutions were designed at Bretton Woods more than forty years ago to introduce a token of rational financial planning into the allegedly free global marketplace. Washington has always dominated these institutions through the exercise of veto power, but now that the United States is a major debtor nation, its voting rights inside both the I.M.F. and the World Bank are being challenged.

"It makes no sense to have a confrontation [among the major powers] at a time when coordination is absolutely necessary to handle the [Third World] debt problem," said West Germany's Finance Minister. But confrontation could not be avoided. When World Bank officials proposed last July that $12 billion be distributed over the next three years to thirty-four of the world's poorest countries, Japan demanded that its voting shares in the bank be increased in

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return for pledging 19 percent of the new funds. West Germany and others refused to reduce their number of votes in proportion, so Japan's new voting shares had to come out of the United States' 20 percent, which guarantees it veto power over any World Bank project. After hard bargaining the United States agreed to part with some of its shares, but the bank's board is expected to lower the veto threshold to 15 percent.

While the U.S. representatives concentrated on preserving their political control over the twin institutions, the other delegates failed to address the long-term problems that could lead to financial disaster. The World Bank's new $12 billion package is small change compared with the debts facing Mexico, Peru, Brazil and other Third World nations.

Clearly, the world debt must be dramatically reorganized if we are to avoid a global recession. The commercial bankers should be required to sacrifice as much as their debtors. Interest rates must be reduced, and the "have" nations should make new development loans to increase food and industrial production in the Third World. In short, we need a great deal more global planning. If these two pillars of the postwar system are too shaky for the task, then perhaps it is time for a second Bretton Woods.

Labor Pains

If all goes according to script, in a few days Israel's Labor Prime Minister Shimon Peres will relinquish power to Yitzhak Shamir of the Likud, consummating the marriage of convenience that has enabled Israel's national unity government to function since September 1984. There will be some last-minute squabbling over reapportioning power between the two parties, and both sides may threaten to walk out, but because neither is confident enough to ask for a divorce and go to elections, Israel's version of *Family Feud* is sure to continue.

Peres faced some difficult challenges during his tenure—especially with Lebanon and with the Israeli economy—and his popularity surged despite the mixed results of his policies. Although Israel pulled most of its troops out of Lebanon, hostilities with the once-quiescent Shiites in the south continue. The "security zone" claimed by Israel and its brutal South Lebanon Army has functioned both as a buffer against and a magnet for attacks by Moslem guerrillas. The three-digit inflation of previous years was tamed, but at the cost of an unprecedented rate of unemployment.

On the foreign policy front Peres can claim modest progress. He put relations with Egypt back on track by resolving the Taba border dispute and bringing about an exchange of ambassadors. He renewed high-level contacts with the Soviet Union. Israel and Jordan are committed to an international peace conference with both superpowers participating, although the matter of Palestinian representation remains unresolved. Talks with King Hassan of Morocco have helped lower the psychological barrier between the Arabs and Israel. For a pushme-pullyou government to have achieved this much is impressive.

Nevertheless, regarding the Palestinian issue Peres's stint as Prime Minister has been a disappointment. Until the Palestinians and the Israelis sit down together, there can be no movement toward peace. Beyond recognizing the "Palestinian people" and accepting two of Yasir Arafat's representatives as members of a potential Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating team, Peres steered clear of any dialogue with Palestinian nationalists. His air force left calling cards all over Lebanon and in Tunis. Since the breakdown of the talks between Jordan's King Hussein and Arafat in February, Peres has attempted to undermine the P.L.O.'s influence in the occupied territories by, for example, closing left-wing Palestinian newspapers and repressing union activism. In its place he is offering the Palestinians "limited autonomy"—appointing pro-Jordanian Arabs as mayors to replace Israeli military governors and licensing the Jordan-based Cairo-Amman Bank to operate in the city of Nablus. In thinly veiled coordination with the Israelis, Hussein is participating in this effort while adding to his own clout among Palestinians on the West Bank.

But like the village leagues, an earlier Israeli attempt to foster an alternative leadership among West Bankers, limited autonomy, even with Jordanian co-sponsorship, will go nowhere. Palestinians of the occupied territories don't want to be ruled by Israel or Jordan. A recent poll conducted jointly by *Al-Fajr*, *Newsday* and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation shows that 93 percent of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians consider the P.L.O. to be their representative. A solid 79 percent endorse Arafat as their leader, and only 1 percent support Israeli-appointed mayors. A study conducted in June by the Israeli military government in Gaza reported similar findings.

The Shamir-led unity government, which Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee chair Abba Eban has called "the tunnel at the end of the light," will no doubt battle all attempts to move the peace process forward. An early skirmish over new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories is likely and so is conflict between Likud and Labor over Peres's diplomatic initiatives. As Foreign Minister, Peres will try to keep the ball rolling, but he is bound to face hardening Arab attitudes, as the Likud's Greater Israel ideology returns to the fore.

Shamir will soon find that, to paraphrase Mel Brooks, it's good to be the Prime Minister. The power to set the government's agenda and control the Cabinet will do much to revive his political fortunes, as it did for Peres. He will still have to contend with Industry Minister Ariel Sharon and Housing Minister David Levy, who covet his job. But the longer Shamir can hold things together, the better Likud's chances in new elections, as Israelis begin to forget the Peres years. The best that can be hoped for, then, is an early dissolution of the national unity coalition, preferably over the issue of peace. Peres's approach has won him points with the Israeli public. Perhaps unshackled from Likud he might dare to make a more serious overture to the Palestinians.

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Rovsek Redux

Here we go again! On September 12 former Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger officially kicked off the three-year celebration of the bicentennial of the United States Constitution, and somehow it all seems familiar.

Burger, you'll recall, decided to step down from the high court to head the official Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. In establishing the commission, Congress apparently tried to limit the potential for financial abuse and commercialization. Its budget, to stretch through 1991, when a Bill of Rights celebration will be held, is $12 million. Private donations were limited to $25,000 for individuals and $100,000 for corporations. Most important, the commission was barred from selling its logo to corporate sponsors.

It didn't take long for Burger to attack those terms as "miserly" and to make it clear he wanted to see some big money. Legislation that has already passed the House and is now before the Senate doubles the budget to $24 million, raises the limit on donations to $250,000 for individuals and $1 million for corporations and puts the bicentennial logo up for sale.

Even before the government could name its official body, a number of private groups rushed in, just as they did last time. First off the mark was We the People 200, whose full-page advertisements recently began appearing in corporate publications. Although the Burger commission is not authorized—at least for now—to solicit corporate sponsorships, the ads offer "13 of America's leading businesses" a special sponsorship package for a "celebration on a scale never before seen in the United States or the world." (And you thought David Wolper's "Liberty Weekend" was the show to end all shows.) Specifically up for bids: "a dignified combination of highly visible Corporate Sponsorships, national television coverage of the unique ceremonies and festivities and a very upscale licensing program." Interested? Contact Richard Rovsek.

You may remember Rovsek, the corporate marketer who in 1981 set up the private Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, which in turn signed him to a $3.6 million contract to recruit corporate sponsors. In "The Selling of Miss Liberty" and "The Battle for Ellis Island" [*The Nation*, November 9, 1985, and November 30, 1985, respectively], we showed how Rovsek established the foundation before a government commission was even appointed, then arranged for the two to work together. Eventually the private groups, accountable to no outside authority, swallowed up the public one.

At first commission chair Lee Iacocca and corporate marketer Rovsek worked together amicably, but then the National Park Service complained that Rovsek was issuing tasteless and factually incorrect Liberty ads and direct-mail appeals. After the foundation decided that "Rovsek attempted to profit unduly from the restoration effort by soliciting business from the same sponsors he recruited," his contract was bought out. That experience does not seem to have daunted him, however.

Gene Mater, a retired CBS executive who is now communications director of the Burger commission, told us that there is no connection between the official group and We the People 200, adding that he had never even heard of Rovsek. But Rovsek not only claims to have met with Mater "several times"; he also insisted to us that "We the People 200 is the organization that has been sanctioned by Burger to do the celebration."

Rovsek is stretching the truth. We the People 200 is a quasi-governmental group, appointed in September 1984 by Philadelphia Mayor Wilson Goode to sponsor a celebration at Independence Hall next September. Its aim, an official of the group told us, is to promote Philadelphia tourism.

"It's a very active group," Mater told us. "Instead of being in competition, we decided to join them for September of '87." A spokeswoman for We the People 200 agreed. "They are an entirely separate organization so there's no official affiliation, although we are partners in a number of projects and complement each other," said media project manager Elaine Potwardoski. "By the time they were created, we had already been around for a year." Rovsek, she says, joined her organization only "a couple of months ago."

We the People 200's chair is Hobart Cawood, superintendent of Independence National Historical Park, which is run by the National Park Service. Ironically, the group, which has raised $5.7 million toward a $15 million goal, is working out of the offices of the Park Service—the same agency that almost from the beginning pushed for Rovsek's ouster from the Liberty project.

Potwardoski claims that the group's "corporate sponsorship and licensing arrangements will be considered with a mind toward the dignity of what it is that we're celebrating." The Burger commission, too, has come out in favor of dignity. Press aide Charles Timanus said, "I don't think the commission wants to have 'Miller Lite, the official beer of the bicentennial of the Constitution.'" That's what Iacocca and company said as they were licensing official Liberty air fresheners. We the People 200 was "satisfied by what we learned" about Rovsek's history, Potwardoski said. She added, "I believe we approached him."

For the record at least, the Park Service and its parent agency, the Interior Department, seem to have forgiven their old nemesis. "So long as he can be kept within the bounds of good taste and propriety, so long as he can be controlled, we have no problem with Richard Rovsek," said Deputy Under Secretary of the Interior Keith Eastin, who also served on the board of the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation. Privately, however, Interior officials to whom we described Rovsek's new job laughed ruefully. "You gotta love it," one official chuckled. "Déjà vu."

ERIC FETTMANN AND ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ

Eric Fettmann is assistant city editor for the New York Post. *Roberta Brandes Gratz, an expert on urban redevelopment, is completing a book on that topic.*

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Flimflam Meets Flamboyance

Joseph Treaster went to Jamaica and reported in *The New York Times* for September 22 that polls and local elections showed that former Prime Minister Michael Manley and his People's National Party were way ahead of the forces led by Jamaica's present leader, Edward Seaga. Treaster wrote that "a return to power by Mr. Manley, who conducted a flamboyant domestic and international policy that wrecked Jamaica's economy and kept him sparring with Washington, would be regarded by many as a defeat for the Reagan Administration."

You may be sure that as Seaga's term ebbs (elections have to occur before the end of 1988), we'll be reading a lot more of this kind of thing. Articles such as Treaster's act as scene-setters, establishing the ideological tone to be adopted by the stream of U.S. reporters making the trip to Kingston. I particularly like the use of "flamboyant," tilting the reader toward "wrecked," thus suffusing Manley in the aroma of Qaddafian nuttiness.

The truth of Manley's term as Prime Minister, from 1972 to 1980, was somewhat different. One of his major aims, which speedily earned him an R rating in the corridors of capital, was to get a better price from the multinationals for Jamaica's bauxite. Further lowering his reputation in these same corridors, Manley increased government spending on social programs, provided subsidies for food and other necessary imports, and created public works employment programs and farming co-ops.

Retribution for these modest expressions of a social democratic program was swift in coming: a strike by the local bourgeoisie, taking the form of capital flight, slowed-down investment, deterioration of machinery. The aluminum companies mining the bauxite threatened to withdraw, and the U.S. press did its loyal part by playing up stories of violence in Jamaica. Tourists consequently stayed away, thus exacerbating a severe shortage of foreign exchange.

Manley at first had refused to borrow under conditions imposed by the I.M.F., announcing, "We are not for sale." Cut off from the international money markets and forced to borrow because of the shortage of foreign exchange, Manley finally had to cave in to the I.M.F. in 1977. The fund's terms included a ceiling on wages, devaluations running as high as 50 percent over time and cuts in government spending. Even so, the money from the I.M.F. was insufficient. In sum, Manley was done in by a strike of local capital and by the I.M.F., which jointly conspired to wreck the Jamaican economy.

Enter, in October 1980, the love child of Washington and of international and local capital, Edward Seaga. Nourished by generous loans from the I.M.F., he boosted gasoline prices 20 percent and enjoyed breakfast with the president of Coca-Cola amid the ensuing riots. "Free market" policies had their day, true to the prescriptions laid down by the I.M.F. The formula: devaluation, elimination of government subsidies, lower government spending. Result: contraction of local production as wages were frozen and demand fell, upsoaring of prices, immiration of the lower classes. Thus, in 1984 food prices in Jamaica went up 32 percent; fuel, 30 percent; housing, 38 percent; transportation, 19 percent. Production of bauxite fell by 36 percent between 1980 and 1983, and shifted from Jamaica to Australia, in a graphic lesson to Seaga of what the word "free" in free market can mean.

So much for the facts behind "flamboyance." There's a deeper lesson too, which no doubt Michael Manley, chastened by his earlier sojourn in power, is pondering. What is the margin of maneuver for progressive action by a small country in today's international economy, particularly if Washington chooses to regard your success as its defeat? Signposts to the answer may be found in Kingston and Managua, with a stopover on the little island of Grenada.

Napoleon's Return

President Duarte of El Salvador will soon arrive on these shores for another visit, in the course of which he will be invoked by press and Congress as great nation-healer and pragmatic espouser of the middle way. The archives are clogged with evidence demonstrating that Duarte has always been an apologist for right-wing terror. One particularly fine example of his spacious moral vision is a letter he sent *The Miami Herald* on November 9, 1981. Bear in mind that at the moment that President Duarte was communicating his views to *The Herald*, the right-wing terror in El Salvador was reaching a peak, with about 30,000 people killed up to that point. A couple of weeks later, Raymond Bonner was reporting the Morazán massacre to readers of *The New York Times*.

Duarte forbore to mention such ghastly realities, preferring to announce:

> The armed forces are waging a heroic battle against a cruel and pitiless enemy supported by great resources of ideological aggression. . . .
>
> This goes parallel with armed aggression. It is geared to neutralize and intimidate the American people, to terrify it and to ease the fall of El Salvador under Soviet domain. This would be one more prey in the conquest plan in the Central American region that Moscow has designed to pursue. Immediately after that its greatest award would be the North American nation, to which it would rise after a long and meticulous conquest on other nearby countries.

The Liberal Mind in 1986

By the bizarre coordinates of today's mainstream press Richard Cohen, columnist for *The Washington Post*, is regarded as a liberal. The following episode is thus a striking illustration of the condition of liberalism in the United States today.

On September 7, *The Post* launched its new-format Sunday magazine. Up at the front was a column by Cohen. He took as his theme the fact that in order to gain entrance to certain Washington jewelry stores customers have to ring a bell. Usually, said Cohen, the ring-back that unlocks the

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

door is almost automatic, but "according to the owner of one store, only one type of person does not get admitted: Young black males. The owner says they are the ones who stick him up." Nearby, Cohen continued, is a men's clothing shop— upscale, but not really expensive. "When young black males enter this store, the sales help are instructed to leave their customers and, in the manner of defensive backs in football, 'collapse' on the blacks. Politely, but firmly, they are sort of shooed out of the store. The owner's explanation for this? Young blacks are his shoplifters."

"Are these," asks Cohen, reaching to get the bull by the horns, "examples of racism?" He answers his question first by saying that the shopkeepers think that either it is racism or at least they could be accused of racism. "They are loath to talk about their policies and quick to assert their liberalism, but business, as they say, is business."

Columnists rush in where shopkeepers fear to tread. After citing one black colleague who thought the shopkeepers' policies were not racist and one who thought they were, Cohen delivered himself of the following amazing sentiments. "As for me," he wrote, "I'm with the store owners." Remarking that danger on the streets and in the stores stems from young black males who "commit an inordinate amount of urban crime," Cohen went on:

> For too long now, liberals have reacted to race as predictably as the racists they so abhor. [Note the familiar maneuver whereby liberals end up being the moral equivalent of racists.—A.C.] Like racists, they too sometimes see nothing but race, ignoring all other factors. As long as race is involved, it dominates. . . . As for our Washington storekeepers, race is only one factor in their admissions policy. Age and sex count, too. [Can this man be serious? Stop me before I kill again.—A.C.] And while race is clearly the most compelling factor, ask yourself what their policies would be if young white males were responsible for most urban crime. . . . A nation with our history is entitled to be sensitive to race and racism—and we are all wary of behavior that would bring a charge of racism. But the mere recognition of race as a factor—especially if those of the same race recognize the same factor—is not in itself racism. This may apply as much to some opponents of busing or public housing in their own neighborhood [Incredible!—A.C.] as it does to who gets admitted to jewelry stores. Let he who would open the door throw the first stone.

True to liberal form, Cohen disclosed that he was alert to possible miscarriages of justice associated with the policy of either throwing a young black male out of a store or refusing him admittance in the first place. "Generalities have their injustices," he brooded, before noting that insurance companies discriminate against teen-age drivers, presumably for sound statistical reasons, even though any particular teen-age individual might have a safe driving record.

This mention of insurance companies might have rung a useful bell in Cohen's mind, evoking for him the effort of insurance companies in 1867—an episode discussed not too long ago in these pages—to stop the sale of fire insurance to Jews. Cohen's intellectual predecessors at *The Nation* argued for the insurance companies, lecturing "the Hebrew gentlemen who were so offended with the insurance companies in this city a short time ago, because they refused to ensure persons of the Jewish persuasion after having found that the number of Jewish fires in insured premises was much greater in proportion than that of Christian fires." *The Nation*, like the Washington jewelry store owners, pointed out that business is business. "This being the case, any insurance officer who treated Hebrew insurers as he would treat Christians or Buddhists would be guilty of a gross betrayal of the stockholders. People put their money in insurance companies not for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing the great principles of religious freedom, but for the purpose of making as much money as possible; and the plan for the friends of toleration to adopt is to get the Jewish swindlers and incendiaries who have brought this stigma on their race to give up their bad practices."

Cohen's column, along with other material in the same issue of the magazine, has led to outrage in Washington. There have been protest demonstrations outside *The Post* building, with *The Post*'s editor, Ben Bradlee, promising to be responsive to the black community's concerns. On September 25, Ronald White, a member of the paper's editorial-page staff, wrote on *The Post*'s Op-Ed page: "It is supposedly just fine for a Washington columnist to say he sides with the storeowners and then wonder why so many blacks are infuriated with him. Their anger is simple, and I'm glad they are displaying it. They do not condone racism by any name. They are tired of being treated with the same damnable stereotypes that haunted my father's family 20 years ago."

A week before White's article was printed a couple of well-dressed black men, Garry Gibbs and Neal Fenner, went into a Washington dress shop to get a present for one of their wives. Nervous store clerks called the police. By the time the police got there the two had left, but police tracked them to a second store, pulled them out of a line at the counter and, in front of a crowd in the store and despite the protests of their friends who worked at the store, grilled them and scrutinized their identification. No doubt the police would have insisted that no question of racism was involved. The clerks in the first store had reported two black men "loitering." One of the two rather deftly pointed out that only black shoppers loiter; white shoppers browse.

An article in *The Washington Post*'s business section for September 30 reported that a survey conducted by the retail bureau of the Greater Washington Board of Trade in the twelve months ending July 1986 indicates that not much has changed since a similar survey was conducted in 1979, which showed that 71 percent of those apprehended for shoplifting came from middle- and upper-income brackets. The new survey concludes that its findings "don't project a profile of young black males, 18 to 25, who roam store aisles, snatching jewelry, shirts and steaks." Indeed, say retail bureau officials, statistics "demonstrate that there is no single 'profile' of a thief."

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SOVIETICUS.

STEPHEN F. COHEN

Ever since Mikhail Gorbachev became Soviet leader in March 1985, a new détente with the United States, including an agreement to stop the nuclear arms race, has been the primary objective of his foreign policy. Why, then, was the U.S. correspondent Nicholas Daniloff arrested in Moscow on August 30—an extraordinary action that gravely jeopardized not only Gorbachev's plan for a second summit with President Reagan but his entire policy?

The two explanations favored by American commentators are implausible. One is that by arresting Gennadi Zakharov, a Soviet physicist at the United Nations, on spy charges a week earlier, the F.B.I. witlessly triggered a knee-jerk retaliation against Daniloff by Soviet authorities, who did not foresee the furor it would create. The problem with this Keystone Cops scenario is that Daniloff's jailing was unprecedented. In recent decades several American journalists in Moscow were accused of espionage, but none were actually jailed. If the Soviet motive was routine retaliation, Daniloff was not an appropriate target. Nor is such a blunder characteristic of the new Soviet leadership, whose skill at international "public relations" has been widely noted. Far more likely, the jailing of an American journalist was calculated to provoke a major political scandal.

The other implausible explanation is that Gorbachev contrived Daniloff's arrest as an excuse to cancel the Washington summit planned at the Geneva meeting last November. Why would the Soviet leader sabotage his own pro-détente foreign policy, which is an integral part of his campaign for internal reform and on which he has built much of his prestige? Even if Gorbachev had decided against going to Washington, he had a reasonable way out. Having insisted all along that a second summit would be pointless without real progress toward arms control, he could have blamed the Reagan Administration's intransigence.

We may never know the full Zakharov-Daniloff story. But we can begin by placing the decision to arrest Daniloff in the context of ongoing Soviet politics, where there is intense conflict. As was evident from several visits to Moscow, the most recent last month, Gorbachev's reformist proposals in domestic policy, from economics to culture, continue to arouse strong opposition. He still lacks the power to impose his policies or to disregard oppositionist opinion.

The same is true in foreign policy, where Gorbachev's bold new approaches in strategic areas, from China and Japan to Israel and nuclear weapons, have collided with Soviet vested interests and dogmas. Having failed to produce any important achievements, his conciliatory policy toward the United States is particularly vulnerable. Indeed, if we view the period from just before the Geneva summit to Zakharov's arrest through Soviet eyes, as we must, it has been a year of major Soviet overtures and concessions met by a succession of American "rebuffs" and "provocations."

In August 1985, for example, Gorbachev announced a unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing and on the deployment of European missiles. Washington responded by inflating a minor "spy dust" incident into a threat to the November summit and by continuing its nuclear testing. Gorbachev then dropped his demand that Reagan's Star Wars program be on the summit agenda, but as the two leaders arrived in Geneva, someone made public Secretary of Defense Weinberger's letter to the President protesting virtually any arms control agreement.

The pattern continued after Geneva, amid expectations of another summit. Between January and July, Gorbachev extended his moratorium on testing; made major concessions on European and Asian missiles; abandoned Soviet opposition to on-site treaty verification and to Star Wars research; offered to reduce offensive nuclear weapons in return for a U.S. extension of the 1972 ABM treaty; and announced a token reduction in Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

During those same months the Reagan Administration ordered a large reduction in the Soviet U.N. mission in New York; sailed U.S. warships into Soviet waters; linked U.S. military actions against Nicaragua and Libya to Soviet support for those countries; decided to give advanced anti-aircraft missiles to the Afghan rebels; repudiated the 1979 SALT provisions; threatened to jettison the ABM treaty; and continued to test nuclear devices for its Star Wars program. Nonetheless, on August 18, Gorbachev again extended the Soviet moratorium on testing.

Imagine the charges in the United States against a President who persisted in making concessions to the Soviet Union in the face of such provocations. No clamorous accusations have been leveled publicly against Gorbachev, but by midsummer high-level objections to his policy were increasingly evident in the Soviet media. In particular, military officials hinted ominously that his "dangerous illusions" about the United States were threatening Soviet national security. Several officials publicly referred to "different opinions" about Gorbachev's continuation of the moratorium, a sure sign of sharp protests behind the scenes.

Then came Zakharov's jailing by U.S. authorities, who wildly exaggerated his activities. There are two possible explanations of what followed. Either an opposition group seized the opportunity to arrest Daniloff in order to force an end to Gorbachev's conciliatory policy; or, confronted with a demand that he finally reciprocate in a tough manner, Gorbachev had to authorize the action. That Daniloff may have been arrested without Gorbachev's knowledge cannot be ruled out. Similar actions against a Soviet leader's policy have been taken before. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's remark that Gorbachev saw the Daniloff dossier only after the arrest suggests that possibility. So does Gorbachev's effort to find a way out of the crisis by releasing Daniloff and proposing the forthcoming meeting with Reagan in Iceland.

Whatever the full story, one lesson is clear. Given the existence of powerful opposition to better U.S.-Soviet relations in Washington and in Moscow, only two equally determined leaders will ever find a political way out of the nuclear arms race. For too long that kind of leadership has been present only in Moscow.

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ARTICLES.

DIVESTMENT REPORT CARD

Students, Stocks And Shanties

JON WIENER

The 1985-86 academic year was a good one for the campus divestment movement. The biggest victory came in mid-July, when the University of California Board of Regents voted to sell all $3.1 billion of its stock in companies that do business in South Africa. That's by far the largest divestiture by any university in the country, more than the combined total from the 120 private and public colleges and universities that have decided to divest either partially or totally. The California action, says Peter Duignan of Stanford University's Hoover Institution, "is going to make it difficult for any other university president to hold out."

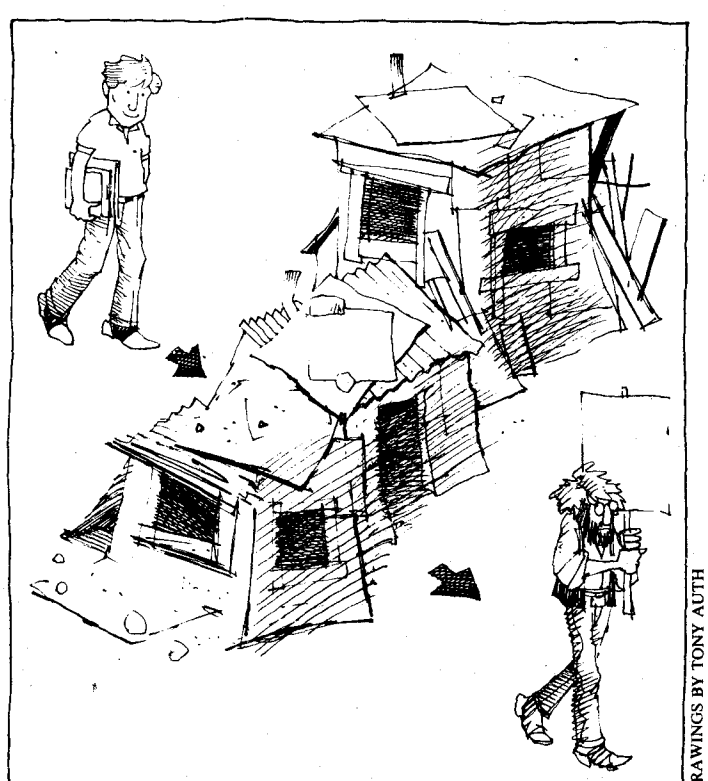
The California Regents made their move at the urging of Republican Governor George Deukmejian. His chief of staff explained that divestment was a "moral imperative" for the Governor. "You don't grow up listening to the story of the Armenian genocide without having deep empathy for oppressed people wherever they may be," he said. But Deukmejian was Armenian last year, when he vetoed a divestment bill passed by the State Assembly. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, Deukmejian's challenger in November's elections, called the Governor's change of heart an election-year flip-flop designed to deprive Bradley of a potent issue. Republicans hope Deukmejian's move will keep him from losing support among college-age voters.

University of California students put divestment on the Regents' agenda and kept it there. At Berkeley in April, when police attacked two dozen shanties at 2:30 in the morning, some students linked arms and resisted arrest, while others erected barricades to stop police buses. The next day students rebuilt the shanties, and the university drew on fourteen different police forces to mount a 3 A.M. attack. Students fought for hours; by 7:30 one hundred of them had been arrested and many injured. The Berkeley City Council then voted unanimously to stop sending its police to suppress antiapartheid demonstrations on campus. Deukmejian, in switching positions on divestment, apparently sought to avoid militant demonstrations on campus during the campaign season.

For the campus divestment movement, 1985-86 was the year of the shanties, makeshift structures disrupting the campus landscape of tidy quadrangles and plazas, symbolizing the viciousness of apartheid and the oppression of South Africa's blacks. The shanties have also come to symbolize the campus activism of the 1980s. They have appeared not only at schools with long radical traditions, like the University of Wisconsin, Reed College and Columbia University, but also in unexpected places, like the University of Utah, the University of Florida at Gainesville and Purdue University.

The power of the shanties was evident in the opposition they provoked. At Utah and Johns Hopkins University shanties were set on fire; at Dartmouth College they were attacked by right-wing students wielding sledgehammers. At Yale University departing president A. Bartlett Giamatti emerged from a birthday luncheon in April to see students setting up shanties. Enraged, he yelled that he'd have the structures torn down. When the police came, at 5:30 in the morning, they arrested seventy-eight people blocking their path; at noon that day 1,500 people joined in a protest rally, and two days later more than 150 antiapartheid demonstrators had been arrested.

The events followed the 1960s paradigm: radicals confront administration; administration calls police on campus; formerly apathetic students are radicalized en masse. Yale learned that lesson in the 1960s and did not arrest students during those years, when Kingman Brewster made the school a model of liberal political engagement. Recalling the Brewster era, 150 faculty members protested the arrest of students, and a faculty committee recommended that the shanties be rebuilt. A municipal court judge later dismissed all charges against the students. Freshman activist Jennifer Yearley told me: "The administration used bully tactics in the middle of the night to destroy something important.



DRAWINGS BY TONY AUTH

Jon Wiener is a professor of history at the University of California, Irvine. He writes frequently about academia for The Nation.

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That's what outraged students." Eric Arnesen, another undergraduate, summed it up: "The shanties worked."

Yale's divestment movement has one significant accomplishment beyond mobilizing students: it has forged a link between students, campus workers and New Haven's black community. The employees' union, strengthened by a militant strike in 1984, has been active in the divestment campaign, and more than one hundred local people were arrested in the antiapartheid protests. Benno Schmidt, who took office as Yale's president on July 1, came from the faculty of Columbia University, which last year promised to divest completely by 1987. He ought to know that divestment works. Nevertheless, he has already declared his opposition to divestment, and this season's cycle of student protests and arrests has begun.

At Harvard University not only did students build shanties in the hallowed yard; alumni also challenged the administration's South Africa policy—and won the first round. Harvard Alumni Against Apartheid (A.A.A.) elected a pro-divestment candidate, Gay Seidman, to the board of overseers, one of two bodies that officially govern the university. Seidman was the first woman president of *The Crimson*, graduated summa cum laude in 1978, spent five years in southern Africa writing and teaching, and is now in a Ph.D. program in sociology at Berkeley.

A.A.A. leaders had placed three pro-divestment candidates on the ballot by petition, challenging the official slate, and they wondered why Seidman was the only one to be elected. Because the election was in effect a referendum on divestment, they had assumed that the three would either all win or all lose. Before the vote the A.A.A. had asked that the ballots be counted by a neutral party, such as the League of Women Voters or the American Arbitration Association. Instead, the Harvard administration appointed its own accounting firm, Coopers and Lybrand, and opened some of the ballots before giving them over to be counted. "Harvard clearly had the motivation to cheat," says A.A.A. coordinator Chester Hartman. "They also had the opportunity to cheat."

When Harvard announced the results, it reported a turnout of only 27 percent, up from 21 percent the previous year. (The record, 33 percent, was set in 1969, when Norman Mailer and Henry Norr, a leader of Students for a Democratic Society, ran as insurgent candidates with no get-out-the-vote effort.) The state attorney general was asked in June to investigate possible vote fraud. There's another election next May, and the A.A.A. plans to run five candidates, all of whom have a good chance of winning.

Divestment was also debated during the past year at Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia; St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana; and Alabama A & M University. At the University of Utah, Connie Spencer, a senior majoring in political science, told me that in February she had been complaining to her friends about how hard it was to get their small divestment group going. "Then three of us read about Dartmouth and how the shanties galvanized things there. We said, 'We'll do the same thing.' So we put up two shanties over the weekend." Within weeks their group had grown to thirty. "Then some white South African students tried to tear the shanties down. Then a Molotov cocktail was thrown at one shanty while people were in it. Then murals painted on the shanties by art students were sledgehammered. Then gasoline was poured on a shanty and set on fire." Each time the shanties were repaired or rebuilt.

Chase Peterson, the university's president, called in Spencer and other divestment leaders and told them that as a result of the attacks on the shanties the university was about to lose its liability insurance; therefore, the shanties had to come down. The students refused to remove them and they sued the university. "This will shock your socks off," Spencer told me. "We won." U.S. District Court Judge Aldon Anderson ruled in August that the shanties are protected by the First Amendment. The university may establish "reasonable restrictions" on the time, place and manner in which shanties are used, but it may not order them dismantled. That precedent could protect shanties on other campuses.

"A lot of students don't agree with us but feel we have the right to do it," Spencer said. "Our biggest critics are Mormon Church missionaries who've been to South Africa and tell us it's not so bad there. Of course, the Mormon Church is up to its eyeballs in South African investments and has a horribly racist background, so we have to fight that."

At Duke University, in Durham, North Carolina, the trustees voted in May for total divestment if apartheid is not abolished by January 1. They rejected a process of evaluating individual companies' policies toward South Africa. Peter Wood, a history professor who helped draft the proposal the trustees passed, argued that "university actions should be based on the conduct of the South African government and not the behavior of the corporations themselves." Trustee David Maisel agreed: "Divestiture, unlike selective divestment, makes clear what we actually desire—a real change in the government system in South Africa."

Students had been pressing the divestment issue at Duke since 1978 but never mobilized large numbers of supporters. When they built shanties last spring, the administration ordered the arrest of six students who had defied a ban on staying overnight in the shanties. The university argued that staying overnight was "hazardous." But a local judge threw the university's case out of court, and the student activists gained respect and sympathy.

The Southern civil rights movement, past and present, figured significantly in Duke's decision to divest. While the student protests were under way, the immense Duke chapel was used for the induction of the Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. as executive director of the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice. Chavis, a prominent black activist minister, praised the courage and commitment of the students who had been arrested. As he called those students to the pulpit, the audience, mostly from neighboring black communities, gave them a standing ovation. The significance of the event was not lost on Duke's trustees, many of

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whom are Southerners who want to avoid rekindling the racial struggles of the 1960s.

At the University of Texas, Austin, hundreds of students (182 in one day alone) were arrested in antiapartheid protests in April. At the University of Illinois's Urbana-Champaign campus sixty people were arrested outside a trustees' meeting at which divestment was rejected and students were ordered to dismantle a shantytown. At the University of Wyoming in Laramie students persuaded the trustees to divest totally. At Utah State University students voted 1,000 to 800 in favor of total divestment. At Bryn Mawr College, 200 students occupied the administration building, and fifty stayed overnight; the next day the trustees voted for partial divestment.

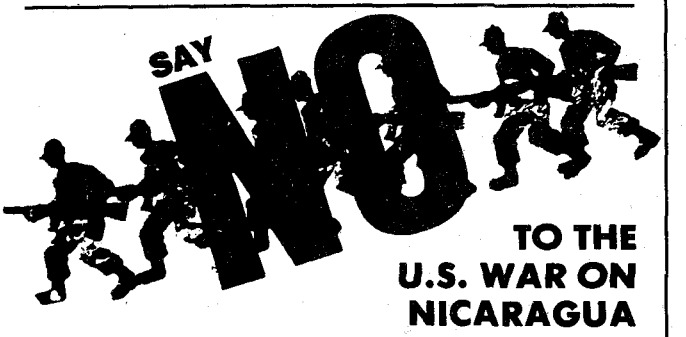
At Brown University four students fasted in the choir loft of Manning Chapel, calling for total divestment; the university "disenrolled" them after nine days. An official explained that the administration was concerned about its liability for the students' health. Paul Zimmerman, a sophomore member of the group, said, "It is no longer useful to appeal to the conscience of our university." In April, Bucknell University's trustees offered antiapartheid students travel expenses so that they could visit the headquarters of companies that do business in South Africa and talk to executives—thus advising the students, Don't tell us, tell them. The students kept up the pressure, and six weeks later the trustees declared they would divest totally next year. At Swarthmore College trustees voted for conditional divestment but cut faculty salaries 1 percent in case the post-divestment rate of return on investments falls—thus advising the faculty, You'll pay for this.

In these debates South Africa raises the same kind of issue that Mississippi did during the early 1960s: students' disappointment with university policy in both cases was brought to a flash point by what Todd Gitlin, a member of the executive committee of Harvard's A.A.A., has called "a volatile mixture of racism and hypocrisy" [see Gitlin, "Divestment Stirs a New Generation, *The Nation*, May 18, 1985]. Like the segregated South in 1962, South Africa has a power structure that is unjust, and it is also distant from the daily lives of most college students. Still, those who think the student divestment movement should come up with a strategy to link its actions to domestic racial issues are asking too much, especially when civil rights leaders and organizations themselves have found it easier to unite on divestment demands than on domestic policy proposals.

If the campus divestment movement addresses an issue that is distant, it nevertheless poses radical questions for America about economic democracy: How should socially generated wealth be invested? Who should have the power to decide? Matthew Countryman, a Yale senior and divestment leader, told me: "Students here are learning about the nature of this institution. Yale University doesn't practice the social and moral ideals we are taught in the classroom. It's run undemocratically. It supports existing power and privilege in the world."

Most campus divestment activity, however, is centered not on radical questions but on a liberal definition of apartheid

Mid-Atlantic States...



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THE NATION'S ISSUES ON
K.A.L. FLIGHT 007

K.A.L. 007: What the U.S. Knew and When We Knew It. Published on the first anniversary of the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, this issue raises serious questions about the U.S. role in the tragedy. After a year of research, author David Pearson concludes that U.S. authorities at the highest level knew the airliner was off course much earlier than they have admitted, and that the questions raised by the official versions of the story can only be resolved by a Congressional inquiry. (August 18/25, 1984)

K.A.L. 007: Unanswered Questions. This issue brings our 1984 report up to date. With contributions by David Pearson, John Keppel and David Corn, it is the culmination of an intensive investigation. The authors analyze Japanese radar data, discuss a Nation Institute-sponsored review, by aviation experts, of the final airline transmission and describe government efforts to obstruct investigation. (August 17/24, 1985)

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as a solely moral issue. The pre-eminent question is, How can you organize a portfolio to provide the highest rate of return without investing in certain immoral stocks? The significance of even that question should not be underestimated, however; recognizing that there are moral limits on making money is a considerable achievement in the age of Reagan. If it's immoral to profit from exploiting blacks in South Africa, maybe other kinds of exploitation are immoral too.

At a Columbia divestment teach-in last year, a liberal investment banker who explained strategies for managing a portfolio without stock investment in South Africa was one of the most popular speakers, prompting dozens of questions. The school administration was partly responsible for the students' interest, since it had defined the issue as "fiduciary responsibility," arguing that students were too ignorant to understand the necessity of investing in South Africa. Students felt they needed to learn investment strategies to defend their position. In fact, the Boston Company's South Africa Free Equity Index, which compares the companies in the Standard and Poor 500 that have employees in South Africa against those that do not, shows no difference in the total return on investment of each over the past two and a half years. But what if investments in South Africa did make more money? You might also increase your rate of return by investing in child labor or slavery.

The divestment movement is going to win. The day will come when U.S. corporations pull out of South Africa, either because the costs of staying become greater than the costs of leaving, or because Congress forces them to withdraw. What will the divestment movement do with such a success? Can it spark a broader, more sustained and more radical movement, the way civil rights did in the 1960s? So far the experience with success has not been encouraging. At Columbia the movement has recapitulated part of the history of the 1960s, as black and white activists bicker over leadership and the less political students fade away. The students who were radicalized prior to the divestment campaign remain active; the rest do not.

Divestment leaders know what's needed. Joshua Nessen, student coordinator of the American Committee on Africa, says: "The focus of the divestment movement has to be broader. We need to find ways of building political and material support for liberation movements. We need to focus more activity on stopping U.S. funding for Unita; we need to link Reagan's support for Unita with his support for the *contras*." Moving in that direction, the Berkeley Faculty for Divestment recently changed its name to Faculty Against Apartheid and is emphasizing support for the African National Congress and other liberation movements. The group has planned a teach-in and festival for November 13, with live music and a phone hookup with Winnie Mandela.

South Africa could also provide the starting point for a wider campaign for democratic control of social wealth. Harvard's Alumni Against Apartheid may argue for a systematic affirmative investment program, according to Todd Gitlin, in which part of Harvard's endowment would be invested in socially valuable activities and projects.

Matthew Countryman concludes: "Before last spring I thought you couldn't compare my generation with that of the sixties. The vast majority of students today weren't prepared to take risks. In the sixties students led the nation in challenging an unjust government policy. That hasn't been true for the freeze movement or the opposition to *contra* aid. But it has become true for divestment. Today's students have come out of the woodwork." □

DAMN METS

The Year Rohatyn Won the Pennant

JAMIE MALANOWSKI

Last spring Joseph Durso of The New York Times *reported that an offhand comment by Felix Rohatyn, investment banker with Lazard Frères, about his interest in playing shortstop for the New York Mets had led the team to offer him a contract for the 1986 season. The 58-year-old Rohatyn declined. Here is a brief history of the season that might have been.*

Rohatyn opened spring training with the Mets and, in seventeen appearances, failed to impress. In the field his range was poor and his arm weak; teammates jocularly nicknamed him Sieve. At the plate he managed only two singles in thirty-one appearances. "Felix has some bad habits," commented hitting coach Bill Robinson. "He's gotta learn to keep his eyes open when he swings." Rohatyn would have doubtless been cut had six members of the Mets infield not chartered a fishing vessel that became lost in a storm and was washed ashore in Cuba. They were interned and forced to spend the summer playing behind Fidel Castro in the Communist Party's slo-pitch softball league (see "Knight, Castro, Teufel Lead Fidelistas to Red Banner; Yanquis Go Home Six Times in 11-3 Rout," *The Sporting News*, August 30). In April, Rohatyn broke camp with the big club.

Rohatyn wasn't used by manager Dave Johnson until May 2, when he was sent in to play the ninth inning of a game against the Cincinnati Reds. He tied a league record for errors and turned a 17-4 laugher into a 17-11 grumbler. That inept play may have earned Rohatyn derision from his mates, but during his brief time with the team Rohatyn had done little things to make himself popular. He assembled Gary Carter, Ron Darling and Jesse Orosco into a syndicate that bought six apartment buildings on Manhattan's Upper East Side, set up Darryl Strawberry's purchase of four radio stations which Cap Cities-ABC was unloading, found an investor for Keith Hernandez's chain of Mexican restaurants, and encouraged and ultimately arranged financing for the

Jamie Malanowski is a contributing editor of Spy.

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successful takeover of the Beatrice Foods Company by manager Johnson and Met broadcasters Ralph Kiner and Tim McCarver. "I suppose I could have some kid shortstop here who could field and hit and all that," said Johnson, "but I like the way Felix thinks."

After the first week in May the Mets were treading water in third place, four and a half games behind the St. Louis Cardinals. The newspapers rumbled that Johnson was more interested in reorganizing Beatrice's La Choy Food Products division than in his pitching rotation. But on May 13, as the season showed signs of slipping away, Felix Rohatyn made his move.

A sudden epidemic of groin pulls forced Johnson to send Rohatyn up to pinch-hit in the bottom of the ninth of a 4–4 game with the Atlanta Braves. Rohatyn ran the count to a ball and two strikes, and then called time. He stepped out of the box and surprised the crowd of 22,128 by striding toward the Atlanta dugout, apparently searching for someone. The object of his search turned out to be seated in the first row next to the dugout. It was the Braves' flamboyant owner, Ted Turner.

"Mr. Turner, I have a proposition for you," Rohatyn later recalled saying. "Your catcher, Bruce Benedict, drove in two runs in the fifth inning. You pay Mr. Benedict, I would guess, about $600,000. Last year he had twenty runs batted in. In other words, you are paying him $30,000 per rbi. I don't know whether you still consider that a sound investment, but I'm prepared to pay you, here and now, $75,000 for Mr. Benedict's two rbi's."

A grin spread across the wily Georgian's face. "But Felix, then we would lose the game."

"Mr. Turner, you have a poor ball club that will finish no better than fourth. What good will a victory today do you you in September? But a $15,000 profit for pretending Mr. Benedict popped up—that's good business." After some dickering, in which Rohatyn committed Doubleday to buying ad time on Superstation WTBS, Turner sold Rohatyn the runs.

"FELIX DEALS A 'W'," trumpeted the *Daily News*, above a photograph of umpire Frank Pulli ordering the scoreboard changed to reflect a 6–1 Met victory. After the game, Rohatyn explained his move. "The runs a team manufactures are its assets. If one can buy and sell the services of players who manufacture those assets, it seems natural to be able to buy and sell those assets directly. Baseball has to catch up with the postindustrial economy. Once, we sewed our own clothes, built our own cars. No longer. Why does baseball insist that a team still score its own runs?"

The baseball world was still abuzz a week later, when Rohatyn dropped his next bombshell. Accompanied by general manager Frank Cashen, Rohatyn announced that the Mets had purchased for $2.3 million the won-loss record of the Houston Astros. "We expect the Astros will finish somewhere around .500," Rohatyn explained. "This gives us a chance to add about eighty wins to our total relatively cheaply." What about the losses? the reporters pressed. "We'll allocate about forty of them to our minor league subsidiaries in Tidewater and Jackson," Rohatyn explained. "As for the rest, we think we can get the commissioner to agree on a five-year depreciation cycle. Maybe we'll begin the next few seasons down five or ten games, or maybe we'll just stick them all in one season and absorb the losses." Months later the press would discover that the crafty Rohatyn was just blowing smoke. The Mets had already sold sixteen losses apiece to New York's football teams, the Giants and the Jets, for $50,000 each, or $1.6 million. In April 1987 those clubs would apply those defeats to their won-loss records. Thus, the two teams that played in Super Bowl XXI the previous January would suddenly have the most defeats, entitling them to the top two picks in the draft.

"DODGERS HOWL, CARDINALS SCOWL," read the headlines, but Rohatyn was already off on his next gambit. He began to buy American League runs in bunches. When Baltimore defeated Boston 7–4 on June 27, Rohatyn telephoned Red Sox general manager Haywood Sullivan. "Mr. Sullivan, your team has lost. You can't use those runs anymore. I'll take them off your hands for $8,000 apiece." Once Sullivan agreed, Rohatyn telephoned Oriole owner Edward Bennet Williams. "You've now beaten the Bosox 7–0. Why overspend? I'll take six, and you keep your win." As the summer wore on, Rohatyn accumulated hundreds of runs, and the earned run averages of American League pitchers plummeted.

Although Rohatyn conducted most of his business behind closed doors, he was enough of a showman to save his announcements as game conditions warranted. Most nights the athletes for the two teams would take the field and perform for seven or eight innings. If the Mets were winning, Rohatyn would stay on the bench near the water cooler, working on

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articles for *The New York Review of Books*. But if the Mets fell behind, the crowd would begin chanting, "We Want Big Wad," and manager Johnson would send Rohatyn to the plate. Sometimes he'd chip in some of the runs he'd bought; other times, he'd be more creative. Once, he produced documents showing that he had leased Bruce Sutter's split-finger fast ball, thus forcing the veteran reliever to lob the ball over the plate, where the Mets pounded it. Another time Rohatyn showed that he owned the air rights to the area beyond the outfield fence at Chicago's Wrigley Field; from that point on, the Cubs could hit home runs only at his sufferance. Then there was the weekend Rohatyn bought all the bats of the Philadelphia Phillies, enabling Gooden, Darling and Fernandez to become the first pitchers in history to throw back-to-back-to-back no-hitters.

The Mets clinched the division title on August 14; the second-place Cardinals went down fighting. With twenty-two members of the Met squad absent (they were attending a Personal Investing Conference run by Lazard Frères in Hilton Head, South Carolina), Rohatyn himself took the mound, backed by two relief pitchers and six hot-dog vendors. Predictably, he was shellacked. The Redbirds ran up a 42–2 lead by the ninth, at which point Rohatyn threw in 110 of the runs he'd been collecting, and the Mets had their first division title since 1973. "Call me macho," Rohatyn said, explaining his lavish expenditure of runs in the final frame. "I wanted them to know that on their best day they were no match for us."

New York faced Los Angeles for the National League title in October, and, as expected, Rohatyn rose to the occasion. Just as the first game of the best-of-seven series was about to begin, Rohatyn informed the Dodgers that he had bought their dugout, and that they couldn't stay there. Instead, they could sit in Section 6 of the loge. Traveling back and forth between their seats and the field wearied the Dodgers, and some of them got lost. They never challenged. Moreover, the ebullient Dodger skipper, Tommy Lasorda, found it hard to concentrate on the game from the stands. He treated the fans around him to beer, led them in singing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," took off his shirt and tried to do the twist with an usherette in the aisle between innings. After the Mets swept the Dodgers, all Lasorda would say was, "Hey, the point was to have fun, wasn't it?"

The Mets also swept the Yankees in the World Series. The M.V.P. trophy was shared by Dwight Gooden, who hurled two shutouts, and Rohatyn, who had bought third base. This was revealed in the fourth inning of Game One, when outfielder Don Pasqua became the first Yankee to reach third and was promptly served an eviction notice by Gooden. Yankee manager Lou Piniella stormed the field in protest, but all his vehemence was no match for superlitigator David Boies, who, with eight other lawyers from Cravath Swaine & Moore in tow, galloped out of the Met dugout and papered Piniella with an assortment of writs and injunctions.

But the Yankees wouldn't quit. Owner George Steinbrenner, prime mover in what was being called The First Big Money Era, had hired investor Ivan Boesky, who had gone out and bought the points accumulated in the 1985-86 season by the Portland Trail Blazers, the Denver Nuggets and the San Antonio Spurs, three teams from the National Basketball Association's run-and-gun Western Division. Steinbrenner thus possessed in excess of 30,000 points. He attempted to use a few thousand of them to pull out Game Two but was thwarted by Commissioner Peter Ueberroth, who issued his famous ruling: "Nope. Sorry. Runs are runs and points are points." After the season, it was revealed that Steinbrenner had badly overleveraged himself to obtain the useless points, and he was forced to declare bankruptcy. Steinbrenner went into seclusion and did not emerge for seven years, when he showed up on *The New, New Nighttime Version of To Tell the Truth* as a Lee Iacocca impostor.

For a month or so Rohatyn was the toast of the town. But just after Thanksgiving, Ueberroth banned Rohatyn from baseball, saying, "Baseball has become too much of a business." Two weeks later he announced that the Burger King Corporation had bought exclusive advertising rights to the 1987 World Series, along with the rights to rename the October classic the Whopper Games.

Baseball fans still argue about whether Felix Rohatyn's single glorious season is enough to earn him a place in the Hall of Fame. □

WHY JOHNNY CAN'T . . . (II)

Who Wants Good Teachers?

PETER SCHRAG

In May a task force of the Carnegie Corporation published *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, a report which serves as a forceful counter to the misconceptions in the current reform craze. What it says, albeit often between the lines, is that "to restore excellence," as then-Secretary of Education Terrel Bell counseled in 1983, is not nearly good enough and may not be good at all. It says:

> Much of the rhetoric of the recent education reform movement has been couched in the language of decline, suggesting standards have slipped, that the education system has grown lax and needs to return to some earlier performance standard to succeed. Our view is very different. We do not believe the educational system needs repairing; we believe it must be rebuilt. . . . America must now provide to the many the same quality of education presently reserved for the fortunate few.

What that means to the task force is a shift in responsibility and direction for curriculum, from administrators and politicians to classroom teachers; a change in governance,

Peter Schrag, the editor of the editorial page of The Sacramento Bee, *has written about education issues for many years.*

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from external management to internal control; and a transformation in organization, from neighborhood-based enrollment to a voucher system.

Unfortunately, the Carnegie group failed to produce insights about the politics of education that were anywhere nearly as elegant as those it produced about its substance. Even after a lavish three-day conference in San Diego, the task force provided scarcely a clue about how to get from here to there. That's not the task force's fault. We have the system we have because that's what the interplay of the political forces influencing education has produced; navigating among them is exceedingly difficult. But the failure does shed light on the kind of reform we are getting and the difficulty of upgrading the system fundamentally.

When it was first released, the Carnegie report drew considerable attention. That's hardly surprising given the composition of the task force—which included Lewis Branscomb, vice president and chief scientist of I.B.M.; Albert Shanker and Mary Futrell, presidents of the country's two big teachers' unions; Governor Thomas Kean of New Jersey; former Governor James Hunt of North Carolina; and California State Superintendent Bill Honig, the commissioner of education most identified with reform in this country—and given its strong send-off by Carnegie, which has funded many other studies on school reform. However, commentators focused not on the report's call for different sorts of schools and sophisticated pedagogy, but on its recommendations concerning the mechanics of hiring and training teachers, to which it devoted most of its space. Those included the creation of a national board to certify teachers, on the model of the medical profession's; the requirement that all future teachers earn an undergraduate degree in the arts and sciences; the phasing out of the undergraduate degree program in education; the designation of "lead teachers" to work with and help train their less able or less experienced colleagues; and, most of all, the realignment of teachers' salaries and career opportunities to be competitive with those in other professions. In some cases that might mean salaries of $60,000 or more.

But where, reporters asked the members of the task force, is the money going to come from? American Federation of Teachers president Shanker replied that New York City now spends more than $5,000 per child per year for its elementary and high schools. Assuming there are at least thirty students in a classroom and the teacher earns $50,000 at most, including benefits, that leaves $100,000 per classroom. Where does that money go? Certainly not to supplies or maintenance of the buildings. If a more competent and responsible teaching force were in place, he said, a lot of the supervisors, inspectors and other administrators now in the system wouldn't be necessary, and the money would be there.

The Shanker story is itself fascinating. Shanker, who was the most militant of bread-and-butter union leaders fifteen years ago, has turned himself into something of an education statesman, who recognizes that many young people now coming out of education programs—and many already working in the classroom—are an embarrassment. He explained to me that a decade ago, when he was campaigning

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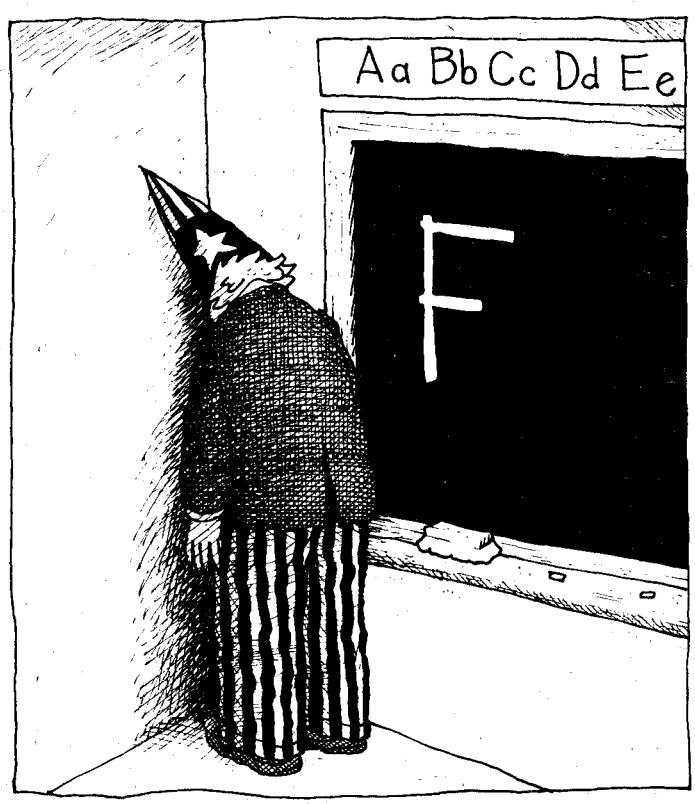
against tuition tax credits, arguing that they would destroy the public schools, he suddenly realized he wasn't talking about how good the schools were because he couldn't. At that point he understood what a problem he had.

The matter of getting better teachers can hardly be more urgent. Even to replace those retiring in the next five years with people of equal ability will be difficult. As Shanker says, the best, those who came into the field during the Depression, have already retired; the second best, those who entered right after the war, will retire soon. A perfect verbal SAT score is 800. Among college students who took the SAT in 1983 and are graduating next year, the average score for intended business majors was 402; for social science majors it was 461; for engineering students, 448; for education majors, 394.

Yet the things that make this report important have been overlooked, and for the same reason that the Congressional Budget Office's report, which I discussed in last week's issue, is being overlooked. Americans are wedded to clichés about decline and getting tough, and we are not really sure that we want to shake things up all that much. The task force's objective is not merely to get better teachers—people who are smarter, who are readers, who know how to ask questions and aren't threatened by them. It is also to let such people create the schools around them and to reward them according to performance. That is radical, but it's inconceivable that the country could get one without the other.

The Carnegie report's scenario for "schools for the 21st century" makes clear that what the task force has in mind goes in a different direction from much so-called educational reform. It envisions schools in which studies of the toxicity of certain pollutants leads some students to examine the public policy issues affecting pollution control and, in turn, to discuss those with local environmental, business and political leaders; schools in which older students teach younger students; schools in which teachers work together to create and evaluate the program and are rewarded according to peer-evaluated performance. To provide incentives, the task force encourages a "market approach," with open enrollment to allow students and parents, under a voucher system, to select the school they find most suitable and to take their state, local and Federal money with them.



None of this is altogether new. The Carnegie recommendations are a mixture of Milton Friedman's old voucher proposals, espoused by Ronald Reagan, among others; the liberal "open school" proposals of the 1960s, which are themselves descendants of Deweyan ideas, come back again by way of the British Infant Schools, now sixty years old; and the curricular reforms fostered in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology academics Jerome Bruner, James B. Conant and Jerrold Zacharias. This time, however, there is no illusion about creating "teacher-proof" programs—university-designed curricula, including texts, outlines, assignments, films and all the rest—that would be, and sometimes were, imposed from the outside, and for which the professor-designers would retrain teachers in summer institutes. This set of proposals would put teachers, not professors, not school boards, not legislatures, in the center of the curricular process. The task force wants to make teaching a real profession, to redesign the schools around it and to let parents and students choose from among the different schools.

And that is what's most likely to doom its proposals. Even before the report was released, task force member Mary Futrell, president of the National Education Association, the country's largest teachers' union, demurred. She had reservations about the idea of lead teachers because "it suggests that some teachers are more equal than others." She was troubled because the report "gives the impression that teachers are not doing their job." She was uncomfortable with peer-evaluation; as long as management hires the teachers, she told me, that's a management responsibility. As an industrial-model labor union, the N.E.A. doesn't want distinctions made among workers, and it's not about to collaborate in making them. And although at their recent conventions both the N.E.A. and the American Federation of Teachers paid lip service to the task force's message about upgrading the profession, the N.E.A. has left no doubt that it's going to try to love Carnegie's proposals to death.

But that's only the beginning of the problems. The Carnegie task force is likely to run afoul not only of the unions but of almost every other major vested-interest group in the industry: the schools of education, the state boards, the local boards, the administrators and, most likely, many of the parents themselves. Could local communities accept the wide-open debate that the report envisions—the dangerous questions about local polluters, for example, much less those dealing with sex, religion and evolution? To what extent are school boards and legislatures willing to let teachers run classes without the guaranteed inventories of

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academic innocuousness that canned, available-for-inspection syllabi, lesson plans and textbooks provide? To what extent, indeed, should they? How many teachers can be found who have not only the intellectual initiative to shape good programs but also the political fortitude to defend them? Even the pap now being offered is regularly challenged by religious fundamentalists on the one side and by minority groups on the other. California's Department of Education has a staff member whose sole purpose is to insure that all the state's mandates on racism, sexism, unhealthy foods, smoking, fair portrayal of minorities—photographs of so many blacks, so many Hispanics, so many women holding high-level jobs, so many men cooking dinner for the family—are observed in the textbooks the state buys.

Although the schools are certainly underfunded in some states and although the Federal government, despite its cheerleading for reform, has steadily cut back on its support for the public school system, money for teachers' salaries is probably not the principal issue. The Carnegie report notwithstanding, if one calculates salaries on the basis of the shorter year that they work, it's not true that teachers are being paid less than the average college graduate, although those with degrees in science and mathematics obviously earn less than their counterparts in industry. Emily Feistritzer, who runs the National Center of Education Information, says that in the past four years, teacher salaries have increased at double the rate of inflation. She says that the average annual teacher's salary, $24,559, works out to about $136 a day for a 180-day contract year. The average college graduate earns $32,216, or about $129 a day for a 250-day year.

But to attract people of the caliber the task force imagines for the whole system and not just for select suburban districts, schools would have to offer teachers a great deal more in status, responsibility and pedagogical freedom. Unfortunately, there's little reason to believe that most communities would want such teachers or the schools they'd create, difficult and independent as many of them would no doubt be. It's easier to call for more of "the basics" or for more years of English or mathematics in the high schools. It creates the impression that one is both tough and caring about quality without requiring much in the way of thought or planning, which, of course, is why the demand for those reforms has swept the country almost overnight.

The great dilemma in American public education has always been the tension between high academic standards and universality—between education for an academic elite and education for the majority. What about those who can't keep up, the not-quite-average kids, the slow learners, the nonreaders, the tough kids, the difficult kids? The dilemma can only become more acute in the coming years, as the number of white, middle-class children in the public schools declines, the number of poor and minority children increases, and the percentage of voters who have no children or whose children are already grown gets even larger than it already is. Exacerbating the academic problems in the schools, as well as social problems such as teen-age pregnancy and drug use, there will be additional political and economic difficulties. Most simply put, because poor and minority children are not well protected in the voting booth or the political arena generally, and because those with political clout have fewer and fewer children in the public schools and thus have no great interest in paying higher school taxes, political support for education and other children's services is likely to weaken in the coming years. Those shifting demographics are already evident in tax revolts throughout the country, and despite the current wave of school reform, their political effects are likely to increase. The baby boom created one problem for the schools; the baby bust will create another.

The task force tried to resolve the dilemma of high standards versus universality by declaring it away. If the country is to have the sophisticated work force needed to compete economically and technologically with Japan and the Third World, it said, it will have to educate every child well. That's hardly surprising; the whole reform movement is fueled by worries about the country's economic viability, and it is laced with comparisons of U.S. and Japanese schools. Indeed, there probably would never have been a "crisis" without the fears that economic competitors like Japan have aroused in this country. But evoking them doesn't help create the new schools the task force dreams about.

There's a curious echo in that call to compete with Japan. In 1957, twenty-five years before the current educational crisis became front-page news, the United States went through a similar crisis, caused not by Japanese but by Soviet technology. The occasion was the launching of Sputnik, when the Russians put a satellite into space before we did. That, too, generated endless comparisons between their schools and ours—warnings about how many days their children spent in school, how much homework they did and how respected their teachers were. It too came during a period of conservative reaction to liberal reforms, and it too reinforced a back-to-basics movement. With the passage of the National Defense Education Act in 1958, it also brought the Federal government into education in a significant way for the first time. The best-selling book on education in the 1960s was Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read*; it was reissued in 1981 as *Why Johnny Still Can't Read*. None of that should suggest that the problems the Carnegie task force now talks about are insignificant; the country badly needs good teachers, and it needs to create an educational environment that lets them operate. It's only to say that as long as good teachers and good schools have to be justified as weapons in a trade war, we're not likely to get very many of them. □

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Courting Disaster

(*Continued From Front Cover*)
rationalization, even if the number of disasters continues to increase as it has in the past decade, there is no evidence that risky systems will be either abandoned or made safe. Energy, chemicals and military power are basic state and corporate obligations in the United States and in the Soviet Union; those dangerous systems responsible for the production of energy, chemicals and military power will always be declared essential and supported by numerous organizations and interests. If catastrophes are rare and risky systems are invariably deemed essential, then we can see why so many lies about their dangers are put forth, why so many people are allowed to be killed or damaged, why there is so much cover-up, and why once whatever passes for an inquiry is concluded, so little is changed.

First a word about the Challenger as a catastrophe. A catastrophe kills or maims hundreds of people, and the Challenger accident did not. But I am including the shuttle in the category of catastrophes because of a story first disclosed in *The Nation*, on February 22, 1986, and later elaborated in *Science*. It turns out that the next scheduled flight of the shuttle was to carry forty-seven pounds of plutonium to power a long-distance space probe. Plutonium has been used extensively to power satellites, and although it is contained in lead caskets for safety reasons, there have been four cases in which the casket was ruptured. One of those accidents, a decaying orbit of a U.S. satellite, contributed more plutonium contamination to the Earth's atmosphere than all the atmospheric nuclear weapons tests combined. Another fell in the Canadian wilderness. Some have not ruptured containment; one of these fell into the Santa Barbara Channel. It seems likely that a hydrogen burn such as the Challenger experienced ten miles above the Florida coast could have ruptured the plutonium casket in the shuttle's bay and spread the deadly substance up and down the coast, perhaps wreaking more immediate damage than either Chernobyl or Bhopal. Of course, a risk analysis was performed for this cargo, but since the chances of a shuttle failure were held to be minuscule, the results indicated that the risk of a plutonium spill was also insignificant. Because future shuttle flights will carry other dangerous cargoes, such as nuclear reactors to power components of the Strategic Defense Initiative, we must count space missions, shuttle or otherwise, as among the systems with catastrophic potential.

In the case of space missions, chemical plants and nuclear plants, we are dealing with very risky systems. On the one hand, those responsible for the systems acknowledge the danger by discussing all that is done to make the systems safe. On the other hand, they persistently deny that danger exists. No government has said there is a nontrivial chance of a catastrophic nuclear power plant accident at some time, in some place. No chemical company has said that there is always a nontrivial risk of killing and maiming thousands as a re-

Charles Perrow is a professor of sociology at Yale University and the author of Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technology *(Basic Books).*

BEHIND THE POISON CLOUD: Union Carbide's Bhopal Massacre. *By Larry Everest. Banner Press. 192 pp. $21.95. Paper $8.95.* A highly critical, well-documented account of the plant, accident and consequences. One chapter is a terse, powerful statement of the immense damage done to all but a small minority of Indians by the Green Revolution, pesticides, cash crops and food exports. The writing is free of hysteria and radical pronouncements, no small achievement when there is so much temptation for both.

THE WORST ACCIDENT IN THE WORLD: CHERNOBYL—The End of the Nuclear Dream. *By* The Observer. *William Heinemann Ltd. and Pan Books Ltd. (Not yet available in the United States.) 246 pp.* This instant book by a team of *Observer* reporters is quite well done. Considering that it was probably published in June, the information on the accident and the recovery attempt is extensive. It also reviews nuclear power accidents in several other countries, providing details and references not generally available in U.S. publications. The story of the heroic and intensely difficult recovery operation is particularly striking.

JUSTICE DOWNWIND: America's Atomic Testing Program in the 1950's. *By Howard Ball. Oxford University Press. 280 pp. $21.95.* An extensively researched and frightening story of deliberate harm to the Mormon communities of Utah and Nevada, downwind of the tests. The author teaches at the University of Utah, and this may explain why he minimizes the role of the Mormon Church, which supported the tests. Nevertheless, the account of the behavior of the military and the Atomic Energy Commission is almost unbelievable. The description of the two Federal trials before Judge Bruce Jenkins is particularly interesting. But the passivity of these communities through the long ordeal which began in 1951 is nearly as alarming as the behavior of the government.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON THE SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER ACCIDENT. *U.S. Government Printing Office. June 6, 1986. 266 pp. $18.* Glossy paper, magnificent photographs and artwork, but a dry text with little interpretation. Critical but not as devastating as some news reports, particularly Stuart Diamond's two-part *New York Times* article on the roots of the accident. The documents in the appendix are the most valuable part. The decline in safety is discussed, but explained in terms of "attitudes" and vague commercial pressures, thus missing a chance to explore NASA's changing relations with the military, the White House and Congress. Contractor Morton Thiokol comes off poorly, but no reconsideration of the science-military-industrial complex is entertained. The idea is that better organization and realistic production goals will do the trick. A disappointing performance.

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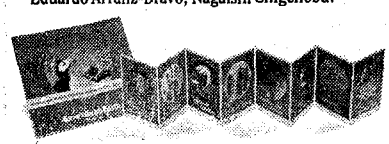

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sult of their operations, and that they have hundreds of close calls each year. At the same time that the hearings of the presidential commission investigating the Challenger accident disclosed gross neglect of known dangers, NASA leaders repeatedly stated that safety was always their number-one priority. Soviet authorities at the Chernobyl plant described the risk of a serious accident as extremely slight a year before it occurred, and only a month before the accident the British Secretary of State for Energy repeated what all nations with nuclear power plants have always insisted, namely that "nuclear power is the safest form of energy yet known to man." After the Bhopal disaster, both Union Carbide and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced that this type of accident could not occur at Union Carbide's Institute, West Virginia, plant, which also makes methyl isocyanate (MIC). Yet shortly thereafter, a similar accident occurred at the Institute plant.

One other risky system deserves mention, the nuclear weapons atmospheric testing program of the 1950s and 1960s, which irradiated sparsely settled portions of Nevada and Utah and which is described in Howard Ball's valuable book *Justice Downwind*. The Atomic Energy Commission promised there was no danger. In fact, when those who had obtained geiger counters reported that the indicators went off the scale during some tests, they were told that this meant nothing and that they would receive more radiation from their watch dials than from the tests, both deliberate lies.

Why the refusal to admit the dangers? The reason is obvious and important: a risky system must be legitimized and defended against any charge that it is risky; otherwise those responsible for it might find it politically hard to justify. So a risky system is declared safer than its alternatives, or simply as safe as anything could be. But why do elites build them if they know they are dangerous? The answer to that is not so simple. Atomic testing was justified by the cold war. Even President Eisenhower, informed of the danger to the troops who would observe the explosions from a few thousand yards, rationalized this by pointing to the perils of communism. Union Carbide cited the benefits of pesticides when questioned about manufacturing the highly toxic MIC.

Thus, reasons of state or corporate growth are used to support risky systems, and once that reasoning is in place, officials can only endlessly insist that there are no risks or that the alternatives—coal mining, Soviet military superiority, crop damage due to pests—are more dangerous. Many people working with these systems undoubtedly believe their pronouncements. After all, accidents are infrequent, those that do occur teach us useful lessons and catastrophes are exceedingly rare. The largest chemical plant catastrophe before the one in Bhopal killed 561 people, and that was forty years ago. Three Mile Island was a near miss. The worst space mission accident prior to that of the Challenger occurred almost twenty years ago, and there have been many successful missions since that time. Thus, strong arguments can be made for building risky systems (though none whatsoever for putting plutonium-powered space probes in one), and convincing evidence produced that they are safe. A system that has an accident costing billions of dollars and thousands of lives turns out to have been a bad idea only in retrospect.

But even after a catastrophe, economic and military pressures, and perhaps state prestige, dictate continued operation. The Soviet nuclear energy program was not curtailed after Chernobyl; future shuttles will carry plutonium and uranium fuels. In the private sector nuclear plants continue to be licensed in the United States, and chemical plants grow in size and toxicity.

We know a lot about the proximate causes of the Challenger accident, little about Bhopal and less about Chernobyl. It really doesn't matter that much, because the proximate causes of accidents are so diverse and the tight coupling that makes damage control so difficult means that each accident is unique. More important, potential causes of accidents, such as poor design, poor operators, faulty equipment, faulty materials or uncooperative environments, always beset complex systems. If it hadn't been the O-ring the Challenger might have been destroyed as a result of any one of the following malfunctions, which have nearly caused shuttle accidents in the past: faulty landing gear; a tire blowout; premature main engine shutoff leading to a dangerously low orbit; an engine nozzle problem on the booster, nearly causing an explosion of fuel; explosive bolts on a booster rocket, sending metal into the main engine

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tank; an oxygen leak; booster rocket vibrations; falling tiles; or a fire in the shuttle moments before liftoff. Based on their history, booster rockets alone have a one in seventy chance of failure. (Because the Challenger had two boosters, the Air Force calculated that the shuttle had a one in thirty-five chance of a total loss. But officials at NASA had asked a number of people to make rough estimates of the rockets' reliability, averaged the guesses and announced that the agency believed the chance of failure was one in 100,000. Richard Feynman, a member of the presidential commission, was so outraged by this that he wrote a private supplement to the commission's report.) Fixing one thing, like blaming one thing, will do little.

We know less about the cause of the Bhopal disaster, but the specific way in which the water got into the methyl isocyanate storage tank is not as important as the design and conditions of the plant. However it got in, it would not have caused the severe explosion had the refrigeration unit not been disconnected and drained of freon, or had the gauges been properly working and monitored, or had various steps been taken at the first smell of MIC instead of being put off until after the tea break, or had the scrubber been in service, or had the water sprays been designed to go high enough to douse the emissions, or had the flare tower been working and been of sufficient capacity to handle a large excursion. That's a long list of failures, but it is a familiar one where chemical and industrial accidents are concerned. It is not uncommon for a company to turn off passive safety devices such as refrigeration units to save money; gauges at Institute and many other plants are frequently out of service, which is not particularly worrisome when the chemical is not being produced; neither the scrubber nor the flare tower at Institute is big enough to handle an excursion from a large tank that is nearly full, even though Union Carbide enlarged the tower somewhat after the Bhopal disaster; and it is unfortunately commonplace to wait until a leak is prominent enough to identify its source by smell (indeed, personnel at Institute have often been expected to use their noses to detect the presence of extremely dangerous chemicals).

When OSHA fined Union Carbide $1.4 million for violations after the Institute accident, Secretary of Labor William Brock spoke in terms that

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would seem applicable to Bhopal rather than Institute. He charged that a complete review disclosed "constant, willful, overt violations" at the plant. The worst problem, Brock said, was "the general atmosphere, the attitude. . . . that a few accidents here and there are the price of production."

In short, the plant at Bhopal, though rundown in many respects, as money-losing plants throughout the world often are, and lacking in qualified personnel, was not so different from the Institute plant. Recall that both the relevant U.S. government agencies and Union Carbide insisted that an accident like the one at Bhopal could not happen at Institute because of its better equipment, better personnel and America's generally higher level of technological culture. But it was only an accident, so to speak, that in Institute the tank held aldicarb oxime rather than the more toxic MIC, also made there, and that the aldicarb tank was not full, and that the wind was not just right and so on. Even the warnings to the community were deficient in both instances, though more woefully so in Bhopal.

The example of Chernobyl, amply discussed in *The Worst Accident in the World*, is no different: the accident cannot be explained by some grossly inferior technology or technological culture. The U.S. nuclear power industry trade group, the Atomic Industrial Forum, was quick to assign such inferiority; it sent a letter to reporters informing them that the Soviet plant did not have the containment facilities of U.S. plants. They were clearly wrong. The Chernobyl plant relied on a pressure suppressor containment system, just as thirty-four nuclear plants in the United States do. In all of those, the concrete shell over the reactor building is not designed to resist the pressure of an explosion. In fact, the Soviet plant was superior in some ways to those in this country even if inferior in other respects. It was better designed to handle the most feared problem, a loss-of-coolant accident, but turned out to be poorly designed for the power surge accident that did occur. Nor can shoddy construction be a basis for invidious comparison. U.S. plants are exceedingly shoddy by the standards required: there have been instances of concrete voids one meter across; two cases of major safety systems installed upside down and backward; cheating on operator license exams, and more commonly on inspections; intimidation of workers and engineers; physical abuse of inspectors; and so on and on. Nuclear power plants simply reflect prevailing practices in much of U.S. industry. It may be worse in the Soviet Union, but it is sufficiently bad in the United States that comparisons are not reassuring.

Those in control of risky systems almost never reveal that an accident has occurred in time for people to take precautions; that belated information is most likely to come from outside the system. The Soviet government's behavior at Chernobyl was quite standard for governments dealing with such crises. It was the Swedes who discovered that there had been a nuclear accident somewhere in the Soviet Union, and even when they confronted the Russians with this, the authorities denied it. The officials were very slow to inform the public about Three Mile Island, and an evacuation was not ordered even though it was not known whether or not the accident was serious. The people of

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Detroit had no knowledge of the meltdown at the Fermi I plant in 1966 until the danger had passed. In Britain, Windscale burned furiously for four days, and not until the fire was put out was the public informed, at which point it was too late to escape off-site contamination. The atomic tests in Nevada were not announced, so people could not take cover if they wanted to; indeed children were allowed to play with the radioactive flakes, which seemed like snow to them. When called by reporters and by the police, spokesmen at the Bhopal plant first denied the accident and then said the MIC was not dangerous. A few months after the Institute accident, where the warning siren was delayed for some time, another Union Carbide plant had a leak. A cloud of toxic gas traveled to a shopping center, and several people had to be given emergency treatment. For two days, while doctors and health officials wondered what the toxic chemical was and where it came from the company denied the existence of the leak. France has not only covered up at least two of its own nuclear accidents but even denied for several days that the country was receiving any radiation from the Chernobyl accident. The government then admitted it had lied and acknowledged that radiation levels over Paris were 400 times normal.

It is not so surprising that the world of risky systems is made up of liars and dissemblers. Risky systems are always at risk of being curtailed, and accidents might curtail them. Therefore, it is safer to operate on the assumption that the accident may not be as bad as it seems, that it will be controlled sooner than one expects and that suppressing information about it may lessen its impact. Indeed, the knowledge may even be suppressed for decades, as the Russians managed to do with Kyshtym. Kyshtym was a nuclear waste storage facility in the Ural Mountains which had an accident in 1957, apparently contaminating a large area. Several villages have simply disappeared from Soviet maps. Although the accident was discovered by reporters and announced in Denmark shortly after it occurred, U.S. authorities denied any knowledge of it, though there is reason to think that the Central Intelligence Agency knew of it. No state with nuclear weapons wants to acknowledge such an event.

Once news of an accident is out, risky systems have much to gain from a cover-up and much to lose from frank disclosure. Only NASA seems to have leveled, for the most part, with the inquiring agencies. But even in that case it is disturbing to find that a major NASA contractor, Morton Thiokol, disciplined engineers who gave crucial information to the investigating panel, and that the agency rushed to announce that the crew undoubtedly died instantly when considerable evidence suggested they lived for some minutes and perhaps many.

At Bhopal, the Indian government refused any independent inquiry regarding the accident for quite a while. It is harder for chemical plants in the United States to avoid inquiries, but an alarming increase in accidents and exposures in the BASF Wyandotte Corporation plant in Louisiana, following a lockout of union members, appears to have been accompanied by a cover-up, and there is little that OSHA, the only relevant government agency, can do. There is another and more massive kind of cover-up in the U.S. chemical industry, however: it is virtually impossi-

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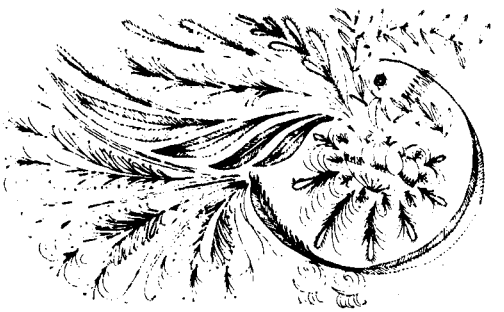

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ble to get statistics on accidents such as leaks from the companies. A special study commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency after the Institute accident had to rely on a variety of obscure sources and some news accounts to uncover a five-year record of 6,928 toxic chemical leaks injuring nearly 5,000 people and killing 135. It is also impossible to get information on the cause and course of most accidents.

As noted, the French do not release information on accidents or near misses in nuclear plants. In the United States, the presence of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission makes cover-ups more difficult. Still, the Tennessee Valley Authority was fined $150,000 in 1986 for threatening employees who went to the N.R.C. or the press with horror stories, and there is considerable evidence of intimidation at other locations, such as the Zimmer plant near Cincinnati. The false information released by the Atomic Energy Commission and the military with regard to the safety of atmospheric testing constitutes a far more massive cover-up than anything the Russians did at Chernobyl. As Ball's book shows, the cover-up was systematic; it went on for decades; and it was all the more repugnant because the fallout was not accidental but deliberate and expected. These were conscious acts that have undoubtedly shortened the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of people. Remarkably enough, even simple precautions—staying inside and washing vegetables—would have greatly reduced the dangers from the testing, but as with Windscale, Chernobyl, T.M.I., the Fermi meltdown and numerous chemical plant toxic releases, systems resist what they call alarming the public. Their reason for concern is not that an alarmed public—such as the intensely conservative, God-fearing Mormons of Utah and Nevada—is likely to harm itself by rioting or panicking, though that is the most common explanation. All technological societies can control that. The problem is that an alarmed public is likely to clamor for shutting down the facility. Such clamor as did arise probably contributed to the eventual cessation of atmospheric testing, so perhaps cover-ups are essential if risky systems are to survive.

Even if there are reasonably thorough investigations of accidents, we should not expect sweeping reforms or even promising ones. Reforms cost money,

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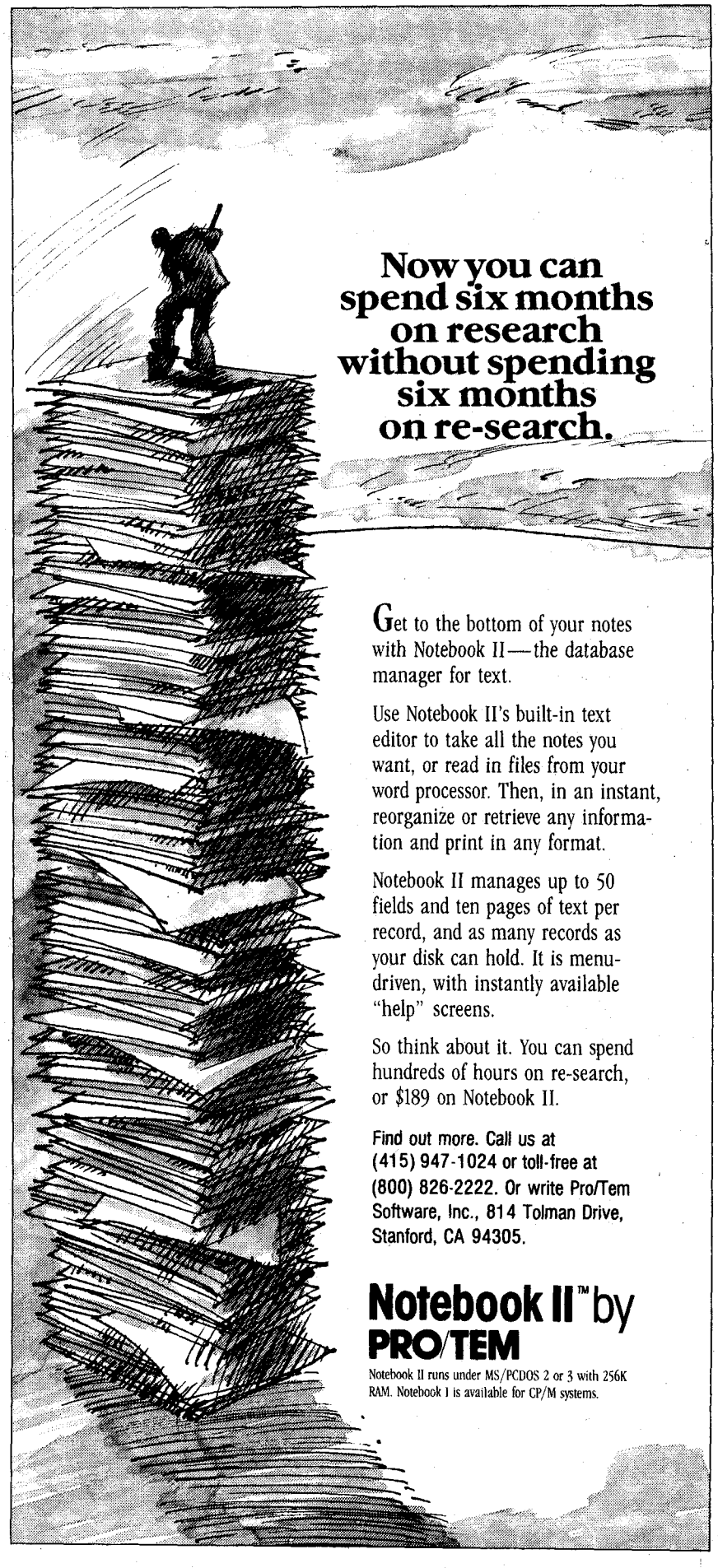
slow down production and can even prompt curtailment of the system; no wonder they are unwelcome. The powerful reforms mandated by the N.R.C. for the nuclear utilities have cost billions. Nevertheless, we have had several close calls during the period of reform, which suggests that the effect of reforms has not been great. I am sure that the N.R.C.'s effort was worth making, just as I am sure that in these complex, tightly coupled systems serious accidents are inevitable.

Union Carbide's "reforms" after the Bhopal disaster are instructive. The company declared the Institute plant safe, but just in case, it spent $5 million on safety systems. There was good reason: the alarm system was poor and remained ineffective; large quantities of MIC were being stored; pipes, flare towers and other safety devices were and still are too small to handle a large accident. Yet despite the modest changes made a similar accident followed shortly after Bhopal. The only sensible reform is not to store MIC and perhaps not to make it, and yet MIC is just one of the thousands of equally dangerous chemicals produced in plants throughout the United States. Industry evidence suggests that accidents are on the rise and are costing more, even as the plants are less and less isolated from communities. Little was done about risky plants following Bhopal, and there is still no chemical regulatory agency. Despite its serious shortcomings, it is better to have the Nuclear Regulatory Commission than to rely, as in the chemical industry, on economic incentives for safety.

I have been arguing that safety precautions are a low priority in risky systems, despite official pronouncements. The Challenger disaster allows us to look a bit more carefully at this problem, since the space program had an exemplary safety record and a demonstrable concern for safety prior to the shuttle phase, and then quickly lost it. Why?

Until about 1972, there were predictable problems in the space program. Two major inquiries indicated sloppiness on the part of both NASA and the contractors, but clearly a government agency and U.S. contractors were perfoming well above the usual standards. Since 1972, and particularly since 1981, all that has changed. The space program became subject to what might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be called the Pentagon effect, involving huge overcharges by contractors, billions of dollars in lost and stolen equipment, engineers and other personnel working at two-thirds capacity, endless design changes, rampant featherbedding and numerous design failures. Stuart Diamond's account in *The New York Times* this past April of the hundreds of critical audits by various agencies and the unfulfilled promises of reform is shocking even to the jaded eyes of an organizational sociologist.

Worse yet, if possible, was the effect of all this on safety. Almost every government agency that had any reason to be concerned cautioned NASA during the 1970s and right up to the fatal flight that it was jeopardizing safety by its lack of testing, by the decline in quality control and by the reduction of safety margins in order to reduce weight and boost payloads. NASA's own safety review panel issued regular if bland warnings about the boosters, the landing gear, the main engine and the hectic launch schedule. The General Accounting Office repeatedly sounded more urgent alarms. Even just prior to the disastrous flight, low-level engineers warned that the weather conditions made the launch inadvisible.

NASA's decline seems to have begun in 1971 with the administration of James Fletcher. (Fletcher was reappointed to his old post right after the Challenger disaster.) A multimillionaire, he sits on the board of directors of many corporations that hold large contracts with NASA, and he has served in executive positions with some. He is from Utah, the home state of shuttle booster Senator Jake Garn, and the location of the important Morton Thiokol plant. The Pentagon regularly allows personnel exchanges between the Department of Defense and military contractors; it also permits waste and cost overruns with little effective surveillance of contractor behavior; it countenances extravagant promises in design phases and frequent hardware failures; it practices stonewalling in the face of charges of corruption. All these practices appear to have characterized NASA after Fletcher took over the agency. It is too early to answer all the questions about why things went wrong at NASA, but the Pentagon effect is certainly a strong possibility.

One thing seems quite clear: the Challenger catastrophe is not a simple case of mismanagement on the rather simple order outlined by the *Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident*. Mismanagement of the sort identified there can be corrected with changes in organizational design and structure, and indeed those changes are being made. But, the presidential report to the contrary notwithstanding, it was not the process but the goal of NASA that was at fault. NASA's goal was not primarily the safe, economical exploration of space. Instead, it appears that the agency had other priorities, which arose from NASA's own organizational aggrandizement; its desire to beat out both foreign and private competition; its effort to regain public enthusiasm by putting people into daring adventures; its willingness to satisfy the pressure for high profits from its contractors, who were, in turn, willing to falsify tests and fake their invoices; its extraordinary sensitivity to the military's demand for increased payloads that would validate President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative or "Star Wars." I have left out the goals of the nongovernmental scientists, who appear to have had grave reservations about the shuttle from the start, but who were willing to give it legitimacy in return for expensive scientific missions.

The official report of the presidential commission barely touches on the matter of goals. It correctly addresses the question of production pressures, but its discussion of the safety program assumes that if only the forms had been filled out and if only personnel cuts had not been made and if only safety officers had reported to the top instead of to middle management, the accident would have been avoided. However, their own discussion demonstrates this is simply not the case. At crucial points top management at NASA and Thiokol—and at Rockwell International, in connection with the ice hazard—simply overrode the warnings of subordinates. The injunction to put safety first, try harder and reorganize will not overcome the Pentagon effect, nor is the reinstallation of Fletcher likely to help. To be safe again, the space program will have to return to its original mission of scientific exploration, and separate itself from both commercial and military pressures. It would also do well to stop using plutonium as a space probe fuel.

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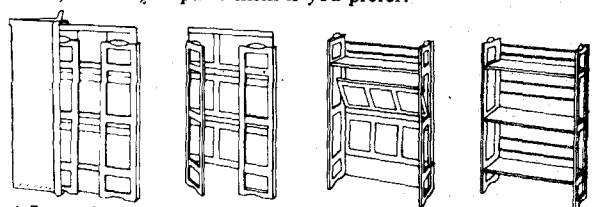

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ways, defeat the safety devices and bring down the system. (This is what I call a "normal accident" in a recent book.) But even this might not produce a catastrophe unless there is also a rare combination of weather and wind conditions, a time and a place where people are present in large numbers, and no warning. Thus, catastrophes are rare, but since they are catastrophes I draw little comfort from that.

I draw no comfort at all from the fact that the rarity of catastrophes helps justify the continued use and construction of risky systems. But I am not sure that even an increase in catastrophes would reduce the number of such systems. Their appearance and continued existence do not depend on the individual corporation or on a single utility company or government agency. Catastrophes are possible where community and regional interests are not mobilized or where they are overridden by national policy; where the economic costs of the disaster can be displaced from the private or governmental organization in charge to the rest of the society; where the social costs are borne by relatively powerless sections of society; and where supraorganizational goals, such as the economic health of an industry deemed vital or the control of outer space, are served. No one wants disasters, and better designs, safety measures and regulations can help reduce their likelihood. But as long as national goals are served by risky systems, we will continue to have them and their catastrophes. □

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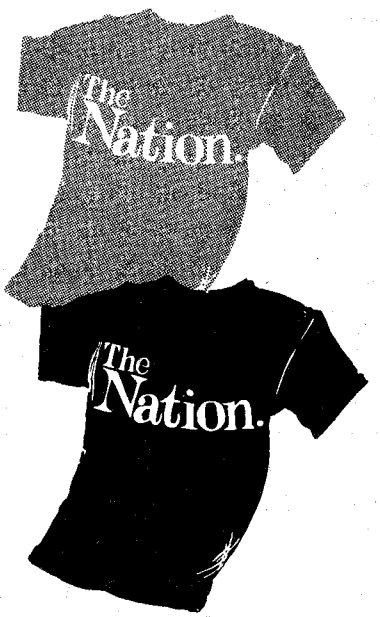

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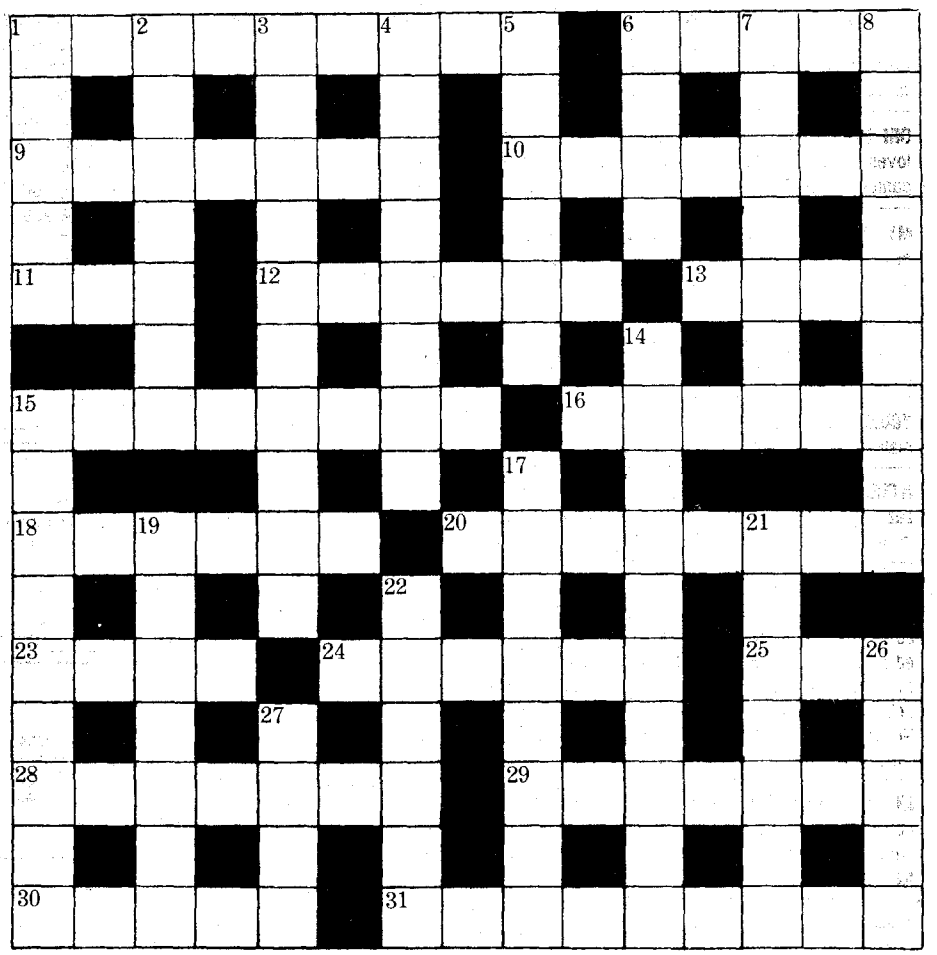
Crossword Puzzle No. 2120

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1, 6 and 24 Implying the early bird might have a chance for an ace soonest. (5,4,5,6)
9 What happened when the sailor was injured? Turkey went this way. (7)
10 Getting married in turn, let something fall very early on the grass—like a flower. (7)
11, 4 down and 18 Was this headed in the direction of the tailor's goose, according to the poem? (A well-intended pick-up.) (3,3,5,6)
12 One doesn't look so well with such a cap. (6)
13 Descriptive of a wheel, perhaps, but one doesn't work this way. (4)
15 Possibly touches up the remainder with such as gold, rather crudely. (8)
16 You might find us more likely to be like Tom. (6)
18 See 11
20 See 22 down
23 Face backward, being put down so. (4)
24 See 1 across
25 and 27 down It might make jewelry (as they say) go smoothly (as one hears), but it's a field that certainly isn't hot. (3,4)
28 One might find it miles up, sometimes like a wave. (7)
29 Goes over the text again and makes a couple of notes on the sale notices. (7)
30 You might tend to act like one. (5)
31 A wearisome routine of those that read millions of letters. (9)

DOWN

1 Timothy told us to do it to the good one. (5)
2 Would rifling keep them from going straight? (7)
3 They may be seen to help calls. (10)
4 See 11 across
5 Makes a current motion like Edwards, commonly. (6)
6 Getting the bird doesn't sound fair! (4)
7 With no sharps or flats, having two D's and some C's might be ornamental in church. (7)
8 They probably don't give such papers to recognized tellers. (3,6)
14 Your opinion might be it's made to study the team with a player from Cincinnati. (10)
15 Proving the king of beasts isn't loyal? One might even consider it revolting! (9)
17 Never is "U," possibly, but we're all part of it. (8)
19 The Yankee type isn't the kind associated with Seville, perhaps. (7)
21 Is it paper work, or just a hobby? (7)
22 and 20 across The Sahara a person's assigned place, or merely what a Legionnaire should not do? (6,4,4)
26 Breaking a lease might be customary with an artist. (5)
27 See 25 across

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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Is Liberty Worth Writing For?

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

CONGRESS fhall make no law refpecting an eftablishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the Freedom of Speech, or of the prefs; or the right of the people peaceably to aſsemble, and to petition the government for a redreſs of grievances.

Our Founders Thought So. And We Think So Too.

Announcing the first annual Philip Morris Magazine Essay Competition:

The First Amendment, those few carefully crafted phrases appended to the Constitution of the United States, placed religion outside of government, assured uncensored speech, and protected peaceable assembly.

It guarded us from those who would impose their religious convictions; those who would muzzle town meetings; and those whose admiration for free speech ends where their prejudices begin.

The First Amendment has been a preoccupation of writers and scholars, journalists and politicians for the last 200 years. It has also drawn the grateful attention of business leaders because it promised that the flow of information about legally sold goods and services would not be infringed upon by government.

The men and women of Philip Morris believe in the principles set forth in the First Amendment and rise to defend its long-standing application to American business. We believe that a tobacco advertising ban, currently under consideration in Congress, is a clear infringement of free expression in a free market economy.

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The Philip Morris Magazine Essay Competition:

Submissions

To write an essay of 2500 words or less that explores and questions censorship of expression, in any sector of American life; that defines and defends the First Amendment's application to American business; and that specifically questions the ramifications of a tobacco advertising ban on the future of free expression in a free market economy.

All entries should be submitted to Philip Morris Magazine, 120 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10017 by January 1, 1987. Essays must be typed on plain 8½x11 paper.

Awards

The essays will be judged by an independent panel of distinguished writers, editors and journalists.

The decisions of the judges will be final and cash prizes will be awarded as follows:

FIRST PRIZE..... $15,000.00

SECOND PRIZE... $ 7,500.00

THIRD PRIZE..... $ 5,000.00

FOURTH PRIZE... $ 2,500.00

AND FIFTY STATE PRIZES OF $1,000.00 EACH

Rules

Eligibility: Entrants must be 21 years of age or older and residents of the United States or its possessions and territories. Entries become the exclusive property of Philip Morris Magazine which shall have the right to edit and publish any or all parts thereof. As a condition of entry, all prize winners understand that they will be required to complete and sign affidavits of eligibility and release entitling Philip Morris Magazine to use their names and/or likeness or essay in publicity regarding the contest. Prizes will be forfeited if winners are unwilling to execute said documents. The competition is not open to employees, or their immediate families, of Philip Morris Companies Inc., Philip Morris Magazine or any of their advertising agencies or affiliates. All applicable taxes on prizes awarded are the sole responsibility of the winners. Prizes not claimed for any reason within 30 days of notification may be forfeited at the discretion of Philip Morris Magazine. No transfer of prizes will be permitted. A list of names and cities of residence of the winners will be made available and may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Philip Morris Magazine. The competition is void wherever prohibited or restricted by law, license required or subject to tax (other than tax on the prizes awarded).

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